BECAUSE
I LOVE YOU
ANNA E. MACK

Julia.
from
Mother.

April 8th 1897.

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU

Poems of Love

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY

ANNA E. MACK

"Love is too precious to be named
Save with a reverence deep and high."

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Because I Love You

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For You,

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THESE POEMS, EXPRESSING WHAT IS TRUEST AND NOBLEST
AND BEST IN HUMAN AFFECTION, AND LEADING
TO THE DEARER LOVE OF GOD, ARE
SELECTED AND ARRANGED
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.

ANNA E. MACK.

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I.

Love! blessed Love! if we could hang our walls with
The splendors of a thousand rosy Mays,
Surely they would not shine so well as thou dost,
Lighting our dusty days.

Without thee what a dim and woful story
Our years would be, oh, excellence sublime!
Slip of the life eternal, brightly growing
In the low soil of time.

ALICE CARY

POEMS OF LOVE

LOVE

TRUE Love is but a humble, low-born thing,
And hath its food served up in earthenware;
It is a thing to walk with hand in hand,
Through the every-dayness of this work-day world,
Baring its tender feet to every roughness,
Yet letting not one heart-beat go astray
From Beauty's law of plainness and content;
A simple, fireside thing, whose quiet smile
Can warm earth's poorest hovel to a home,
Which, when our autumn cometh, as it must,
And life in the chill wind shivers bare and leafless,
Shall still be blest with Indian-summer youth
In bleak November, and, with thankful heart,
Smile on its ample stores of garnered fruit,
As full of sunshine to our aged eyes
As when it nursed the blossoms of our spring.
Such is true Love, which steals into the heart
With feet as silent as the lightsome dawn
That kisses smooth the rough brows of the dark,
And hath its will through blissful gentleness, —
Not like a rocket, which, with savage glare,
Whirs suddenly up, then bursts, and leaves the night

Painfully quivering on the dazed eyes;
A Love that gives and takes, that seeth faults,
Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle-points,
But, loving kindly, ever looks them down
With the o'ercoming faith of meek forgiveness;
A Love that shall be new and fresh each hour,
As is the golden mystery of sunset,
Or the sweet coming of the evening star;
Alike, and yet most unlike, every day,
And seeming ever best and fairest *now*.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

LOVE

YES, Love indeed is light from Heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the soul above,
But Heaven itself descends in Love.
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought!
A ray of Him who formed the whole;
A glory circling round the soul!

LORD BYRON

FOR life, with all it yields of joy or woe,
And hope and fear,
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning Love, —
How Love might be, hath been, indeed, and is.

ROBERT BROWNING.

FROM "THE BOOK OF LOVE"

THE Poet leads us — as I think —
To this chief wisdom: that Love is not Love
Except it tear forth Self-love from the breast,
And so absorb the Lover in that frame
Of imaged fairness, where he finds soul's lamp
So draw, and daze, and tangle him with beams
(Ever so darkly radiating from God),
Beams all for him — albeit dull and dim —
That he shall quite forget what else was dear,
Wealth, comfort, peace, pleasure — nay, life itself —
To live and die in light of those bright eyes,
In reach of those sole arms, in blissful range
Of music echoing from that one sweet mouth.

EDWIN ARNOLD

LOVE'S COMING

SHE had looked for his coming as warriors come,
With the clash of arms and the bugle's call;
But he came instead with a stealthy tread
Which she did not hear at all.

She had thought how his armor would blaze in the sun,
As he rode like a Prince to claim his bride;
In the sweet, dim light of the falling night
She found him at her side.

She had dreamed how the gaze of his strange, bold eye
Would wake her heart to a sudden glow;
She found in his face the familiar grace
Of a friend she used to know.

She had dreamed how his coming would stir her soul,
As the ocean is stirred by the wild storm's strife;
He brought her the balm of a heavenly calm,
And a peace which crowned her life.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

TRUE LOVE

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth 's unknown although his height be taken.
Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

OH, LOVE IS NOT A SUMMER MOOD

OH, love is not a summer mood,
Nor flying phantom of the brain,
Nor youthful fever of the blood,
Nor dream, nor fate, nor circumstance.
Love is not born of blinded chance,
Nor bred in simple ignorance.

Love is the flower of maidenhood;
Love is the fruit of mortal pain;
And she hath winter in her blood.
True love is steadfast as the skies,
And once alight she never flies;
And love is strong, and love is wise.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

FROM "THE SEA OF FIRE"

HOW still she was. She only knew
His love. She saw no life beyond.
She loved with love that only lives
Outside itself and selfishness, —
A love that glows in its excess;
A love that melts pure gold, and gives
Thenceforth to all who come to woo
No coins but this face stamped thereon, —
Ay, this one image stamped upon
Its face, with some dim date long gone.

JOAQUIN MILLER

FROM "THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT"

BUT, hark! a rap comes gently to the door,
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
Wi' heart-struck anxious care inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears it 's nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben
A strappin' youth; he takes the mother's eye;
Blithe Jenny sees the visit 's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and lathefu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave:
Weel pleased to think her bairn 's respected like the lave.

O happy love! — where love like this is found!
O heart-felt raptures! — bliss beyond compare!
I 've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare: —

If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'T is when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.

ROBERT BURNS

TRUE LOVE

I THINK true love is never blind,
But rather brings an added light,
An inner vision quick to find
The beauties hid from common sight.

No soul can ever clearly see
Another's highest, noblest part;
Save through the sweet philosophy
And loving wisdom of the heart.

Your unanointed eyes shall fall
On him who fills my world with light;
You do not see my friend at all,
You see what hides him from your sight.

I see the feet that fain would climb;
You but the steps that turn astray;
I see the soul, the unharmed, sublime;
You, but the garment and the clay.

You see a mortal, weak, misled,
  Dwarfed ever by the earthly clod;
I see how manhood, perfected,
  May reach the stature of a god.

Blinded I stood, as now you stand,
  Till on mine eyes, with touches sweet,
Love, the deliverer, laid his hand,
  And lo! I worship at his feet!

PHŒBE CARY

A LOVER WITH HIS LOVED ONE SAILED THE SEA

A LOVER, with his loved One sailed the sea,
  Voyaging home in tender company;
There blew a wind of Death upon the waters,
There broke a billow of calamity!

It swept them from the deck to dreadful breast
Of the black ocean. To that pair distressed
  The mariners flung forth a plank of rescue;
It reached them drowning on the tossing crest.

Too slender 't was to help — if both should hold;
They saw him round the plank her weak arms fold.
  "Gîr! Dast-i-yar-i-man!" he uttered softly;
"Clasp! hands! dearer than Life to me!" The cold

Bitter salt swallowed him. But those who brought
His beauteous Maid, saved by that sweet deed
wrought,
Spake saying, "Never lived there truer Lover,
Majuûm by such a marvel had been taught!"

EDWIN ARNOLD

HEREIN IS LOVE

HEREIN is love: to take this strange sweet thing
That we call life, and for love's sake to fling
It to that outer darkness men deem death
That love may have a longer, sweeter breath;
To face with unaffrighted heart the gloom,
The terror and the agony of doom.

Herein is love: to lift another's cross,
To give away the gold and keep the dross,
To trample into dust the worm of self,
To crowd its clam'rings on the soul's back shelf;
Nor let it ever dare upraise its head,
Deny its every call till it lies dead.

Herein is love: to strip the shoulders bare,
If need be, that a frailer one may wear
A mantle to protect it from the storm,
To bear the frost-king's breath so one be warm;
To crush the tears it would be sweet to shed,
And smile so others may have joy instead.

Herein is love: to daily sacrifice
The hope that to the bosom closest lies,
To mutely bear reproach and suffer wrong,
Nor lift the voice to show where both belong,
Nay, now, nor tell it e'en to God above, —
Herein is love, indeed, herein is love.

SUSIE M. BEST

LOVE seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.

WILLIAM BLAKE

A QUESTION

MY heart, I will put thee a question,
Say, what is love, I entreat?
Two souls with one thought between them,
Two hearts with a single beat.

And say whence love comes hither?
Here he is, we know, that is all.
When he goes tell me how and whither?
If he goes, 't was not love at all.

And what love loves most purely?
The love that has no self quest.
And where is the deepest loving
Where love is silentest.

And when is love at its richest?
When most it has given away.
And what is the tongue love useth?
The love that it cannot say.

H. I. D. RYDER
From the German of Halm

A WOMAN'S SHORTCOMINGS

SHE has laughed as softly as if she sighed!
She has counted six and over.
Of a purse well filled, and a heart well tried, —
Oh, each a worthy lover!
They "give her time;" for her soul must slip
Where the world has set the grooving;
She will lie to none with her fair red lip, —
But love seeks truer loving.

She trembles her fan in a sweetness dumb,
As her thoughts were beyond recalling;
With a glance for *one* and a glance for *some*,
From her eyelids rising and falling,
— Speaks common words with a blushful air;
— Hears bold words, unreproving!
But her silence says, — what she never will swear, —
And love seeks better loving.

Go, lady! lean to the night-guitar,
And drop a smile to the bringer;
Then smile as sweetly, when he is far,
At the voice of an in-door singer;

Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
  Glance lightly, on their removing,
And join new vows to old perjuries, —
  But dare not call it loving!

Unless you can think, when the song is done,
  No other is soft in the rhythm;
Unless you can feel, when left by One
  That all men else go with him;
Unless you can know when unpraised by his breath
  That your beauty itself wants proving;
Unless you can swear — "For life, for death!"
  Oh, fear to call it loving!

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day,
  On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
  With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
  Though behooving and unbehooving;
Unless you can *die* when the dream is past, —
  Oh, never call it loving.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

AND love? —
What was love, then? not calm, not secure, —
  scarcely kind, —
But in one all intensest emotions combined;
Life and death: pain and rapture.

EDWARD ROBERT BULWER-LYTTON
(OWEN MEREDITH)

FROM "ALICE OF MONMOUTH"

LOVE from that summer morn
Melting the souls of these two;
Love which some of you know
Who read this poem to-day —
Is it the same desire,
The strong ineffable joy,
Which Jacob and Rachel felt,
When he served her father long years,
And the years were swift as days, —
So great was the love he bore?
Race advancing with time,
Growing in thought and deed,
Mastering land and sea,
Say, does the heart advance,
Are its passions more pure and strong?
They, like Nature, remain
No more and no less than of yore.
Whoso conquers the earth,
Winning its riches and fame,
Comes to the evening at last,
The sunset of threescore years,
Confessing that love was real,
All the rest was a dream!
The sum of his gains is dross;
The song in his praise is mute;
The wreath of his laurels fades;
But the kiss of his early love
Still burns on his trembling lips,
The spirit of one he loved

Hallows his dreams at night.
A little while and the scenes
Of the play of life are closed;
Come let us rest an hour,
And by the pleasant streams,
Under the fresh, green trees,
Let us walk hand in hand,
And think of the days that were.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

II.

No life is so strong and complete,
But it yearns for the smile of a friend.

WALLACE BRUCE

He was a friend indeed,
With all a friend's best virtues shining bright;
It was no broken reed
You leaned on, when you trusted to his might.

WILLIAM HUNTER BRICKHEAD

A FRIEND

LIFE offers no joy like a friend;
Fulfilment and prophecy blend
In the throb of a heart with its own, —
A heart where we know and are known.

Yet more than thy friend unto thee,
Is the friendship hereafter to be,
When the flower of thy life shall unfold
Out of hindering, and darkness, and cold.

Love mocks thee, whose mounting desire
Doth not to the Perfect aspire;
Nor lovest thou the soul thou wouldst win
To shut with thine emptiness in.

A friend! Deep is calling to deep!
A friend! the heart wakes from its sleep
To behold the world lit by one face;
With one heavenward step to keep pace.

O heart wherein all hearts are known,
Whose infinite throb stirs our own!
O Friend beyond friends! what are we,
Who ask so much less, yet have Thee?

LUCY LARCOM

WE LOVE BUT FEW

OH, yes, we mean all kind words that we say
To old friends and to new;
Yet doth this truth grow clearer day by day:
We love but few.

We love! we love! What easy words to say
And sweet to hear,
When sunrise splendor brightens all the way,
And, far and near,

Are breath of flowers and carolling of birds,
And bells that chime.
Our hearts are light: we do not weigh our words
At morning time!

But when the matin music all is hushed,
And life's great load
Doth weigh us down, and thick with dust
Doth grow the road,

Then do we say less often that we love.
The words have grown!
With pleading eyes we look to Christ above
And clasp our own.

Their lives are bound to ours by mighty bands
No mortal strait,
Nor Death himself, with his prevailing hands,
Can separate.

The world is wide, and many friends are dear,
And friendships true;
Yet do these words read plainer year by year:
We love but few.

THE GIRDLE OF FRIENDSHIP

SHE gathered at her slender waist
The beauteous robe she wore;
Its folds a golden belt embraced;
One rose-hued gem it bore.

The girdle shrank; its lessening round
Still kept the shining gem,
But now her flowing locks it bound,
A lustrous diadem.

And narrower still the circlet grew.
Behold! a glittering band,
Its roseate diamond set anew,
Her neck's white column spanned.

Suns rise and set; the straining clasp
The shortened links resist,
Yet flashes in a bracelet's grasp
The diamond on her wrist.

At length, the round of changes past
The thieving years could bring,
The jewel, glittering to the last,
Still sparkles in a ring.

So link by link our friendships part,
So loosen, break, and fall,
A narrowing zone; the loving heart
Lives changeless through them all.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

FRIENDSHIP

DEAR friend, I pray thee, if thou wouldst be proving
Thy strong regard for me,
Make me no vows. Lip-service is not loving;
Let thy faith speak for thee.

Swear not to me that nothing can divide us,
So little such oaths mean,
But when distrust and envy creep beside us,
Let them not come between.

Say not to me the depths of thy devotion
Are deeper than the sea;
But watch, lest doubt or some unkind emotion
Embitter them for me.

Vow not to love me ever and forever,
Words are such idle things,
But when we differ in opinions, never
Hurt me by little stings.

I 'm sick of words, they are so lightly spoken,
And spoken are but air.
I 'd rather feel thy trust in me unbroken
Than list to thy words so fair.

If all the little proofs of trust are heeded,
If thou art always kind,
No sacrifice, no promise will be needed
To satisfy my mind.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

O NEAR ONES, DEAR ONES

O NEAR ones, dear ones! you, in whose right hands
Our own rests calm; whose faithful hearts all day
Wide open wait till back from distant lands
Thought, the tired traveller, wends his homeward way!

Helpmates and hearthmates, gladdeners of gone years,
Tender companions of our serious days,
Who color with your kisses, smiles, and tears,
Life's warm web woven over wonted ways,

Young children, and old neighbors, and old friends,
Old servants, — you, whose smiling circle small
Grows slowly smaller, till at last it ends
Where in one grave is room enough for all;

Oh, shut the world out from the heart you cheer!
Though small the circle of your smiles may be,
The world is distant, and your smiles are near;
This makes you more than all the world to me.

EDWARD ROBERT BULWER-LYTTON
(OWEN MEREDITH)

A TRIBUTE

NOT many friends my life has made;
Few have I loved, and few are they
Who in my hand their hearts have laid;
And these were women. I am gray,
But never have I been betrayed.

These words — this tribute — for the sake
Of truth to God and woman-kind!
These — that my heart may cease to ache
With love and gratitude confined,
And burning from my lips to break!

These — to that sisterhood of grace
That numbers in its sacred list
My mother risen to her place;
My wife, but yester-morning kissed
And folded in Love's last embrace!

This tribute of a love profound
As ever moved the heart of man,
To those to whom my life is bound,
To her in whom my life began;
And her whose love my life hath crowned.

Immortal Love! thou still hast wings
To lift me to those radiant fields,
Where music waits with trembling strings
And verse her happy numbers yields
And all the soul within me sings.

So from the lovely Pagan dream
I call no more the Tuneful Nine;
For Woman is my Muse Supreme,
And she, with fire and flight divine,
Shall light and lead me to my theme.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND

MY KATE

I.

SHE was not as pretty as women I know,
And yet all your best made of sunshine and snow
Drop to shade, melt to nought in the long-trodden ways,
While she's still remembered on warm and cold days, —
My Kate.

II.

Her air had a meaning, her movements a grace;
You turned from the fairest to gaze on her face;
And when you had once seen her forehead and mouth,
You saw as distinctly her soul and her truth, —
My Kate.

III.

Such a blue inner light from her eyelids outbroke,
You looked at her silence and fancied she spoke;
When she did, so peculiar yet soft was the tone,
Though the loudest spoke also, you heard her alone, —
My Kate.

IV.

I doubt if she said to you much that could act
As a thought or suggestion, she did not attract
In the sense of the brilliant or wise; I infer
'T was her thinking of others made you think of her, —
My Kate.

V.

She never found fault with you, never implied
Your wrong by her right; and yet men at her side
Grew nobler, girls purer, as through the whole town
The children were gladder who pulled at her gown, —
My Kate.

VI.

None knelt at her feet confessed lovers in thrall;
They knelt more to God than they used, — that was all:

If you praised her as charming, some asked what you
meant,
But the charm of her presence was felt when she
went, —
My Kate.

VII.

The weak and the gentle, the ribald and rude,
She took as she found them, and did them all good;
It always was so with her, — see what you have!
She has made the grass greener even here, — with
her grave, —
My Kate.

VIII.

My dear one! — when thou wast alive with the rest,
I held thee the sweetest and loved thee the best;
And now thou art dead, shall I not take thy part,
As thy smiles used to do for thyself, my sweet Heart, —
My Kate.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

III

Pour out thy love like the rush of a river
Wasting its waters forever and ever;
Through the burnt sands that reward not the giver
Silent or songful, thou nearest the sea.
Scatter thy life as the summer shower's pouring!
What if no bird through the pearl-rain is soaring?
What if no blossom looks upward adoring?
Look to the life that was lavished for thee!

ROSE TERRY COOKE

FROM "THE MESSAGE OF AN ŒOLIAN HARP"

We Cannot Love too Much.

"WELL for him
That he has such a heart to meet his own,
And well for you; for 't is a blessed gift,
Not shared by all alike, — the power to love;
And not less blessèd for proportioned pain,
Its fiery seal, its royal crown of thorns."

"So seems it, Beatrice, to you, who find
No lurking danger in its concentration
Because you have so many near and dear.
Not so to me. I tremble when I think
How much I love him; but I turn away
From thinking of it, just to love him more; —
Indeed, I fear, too much."

"Dear Eleanor, —
Do you love him as much as Christ loves us?
Let your lips answer me."

"Why ask me, dear?
Our hearts are finite, Christ is infinite."

"Then till you reach the standard of that love,
Let neither fears nor well-meant warning voice
Distress you with 'Too much.' For He hath said —
How much — and who shall dare to change His measure?"

"*That ye should love as I have lovèd you.*"
Oh, sweet command, that goes so far beyond
The mightiest impulse of the tender heart!
A bare permission had been much; but He

Who knows our yearnings and our fearfulness,
Chose graciously to *bid* us do the thing
That makes our earthly happiness, and set
A limit that we need not fear to pass,
Because we cannot. Oh, the breadth and length
And depth and height of love that passeth knowledge!
Yet Jesus said, "As I have lovèd you."

"O Beatrice, I long to feel the sunshine
That this should bring; but there are other words
Which fall in chill eclipse. 'T is written, 'Keep
Yourselves from idols.' How shall I obey?"

"Dear, not by loving less, but loving more.
It is not that we love our precious ones
Too much, but God too little. As the lamp
A miner bears upon his shadowed brow,
Is only dazzling in the grimy dark,
And has no glare against the summer sky,
So, set the tiny torch of our best love
In the great sunshine of the Love of God,
And, though full-fed and fanned, it casts no shade
And dazzles not, o'erflowed with mightier light!"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

LEARN that to love is the one way to know
Or God or man: it is not love received
That maketh man to know the inner life
Of them that love him; his own love bestowed
Shall do it.

JEAN INGELOW

LOVE MUCH

LOVE much. Earth has enough of bitter in it:
Cast sweets into its cup whene'er you can.
No heart so hard but love at last may win it.
Love is the grand primeval cause of man;
All hate is foreign to the first great plan.

Love much. Your heart will be led out to slaughter
On altars built of envy and deceit.
Love on, love on. 'T is bread upon the water;
It shall be cast in loaves yet at your feet,
Unleavened manna, most divinely sweet.

Love much. Your faith will be dethroned and shaken.
Your trust betrayed by many a fair, false lure.
Remount your faith, and let new trusts awaken.
Though clouds obscure them, yet the stars are pure;
Love is a vital force, and must endure.

Love much. Men's souls contract with cold suspicion;
Shine on them with warm love, and they expand.
'T is love, not creeds, that from a low condition
Leads mankind up to heights supreme and grand.
Oh, that the world would see and understand!

Love much. There is no waste in freely giving;
More blessèd it is, even, than to receive.
He who loves much, alone finds live worth living;
Love on through doubt and darkness, and believe
There is no thing which love may not achieve.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

SONNET

Or puoi la quantitate,
Comprender de l'amor che a te mi scalda. — DANTE.

Non vo' che da tal nodo amor mi scioglia. — PETRARCA.

TRUST me, I have not earned your dear rebuke:
I love, as you would have me, God the most;
Would love not you, but Him, must one be lost,
Nor with Lot's wife cast back a faithless look,
Unready to forego what I forsook.
This say I, having counted up the cost;
This, though I be the feeblest of God's host;
The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds with His crook.
Yet while I love my God the most, I deem
That I can never love you overmuch;
I love Him more, so let me love you too.
Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
I cannot love you if I love not Him,
I cannot love Him if I love not you.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

GO FORTH IN LIFE NOT SEEKING LOVE

GO forth in life, O friend, not seeking love;
A mendicant that with imploring eye
And outstretched hand asks of the passers-by
The alms his strong necessities may move.

For such poor love, to pity near allied,
Thy generous spirit may not stoop and wait,
A suppliant, whose prayer may be denied,
Like a spurned beggar's at a palace gate;
But thy heart's affluence, lavish, uncontrolled,
The largess of thy love, give full and free,
As monarchs in their progress scatter gold;
And be thy heart like the exhaustless sea,
That must its wealth of cloud and dew bestow,
Though tributary streams or ebb or flow.

ANNE C. LYNCH

LOVE'S FULFILLING

OH, Love is weak
Which counts the answers and the gains,
Weighs all the losses and the pains,
And eagerly each fond word drains,
A joy to seek.

When Love is strong,
It never tarries to take heed,
Or know if its return exceed
Its gift; in its sweet haste no greed,
No strifes belong.

It hardly asks
If it be loved at all; to take
So barren seems, when it can make
Such bliss for the beloved sake,
Oh, bitter tasks!

Its ecstasy
Could find hard death so beauteous,
It sees through tears how Christ loved us,
And speaks, in saying, "I love thus,"
No blasphemy.

So much we miss
If Love is weak; so much we gain
If Love is strong: God thinks no pain
Too sharp or lasting to ordain
To teach us this.

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

WHAT SHALL I DO FOR MY LOVE?

WHAT shall I do for my love,
Who is so tender
And dear and true,
Loving and true and tender,
My strength and my defender —
What shall I do?

I will cleave unto my love,
Who am too lowly
For him to take.
With a self-surrender holy
I will cleave unto him solely,
I will give my being wholly
For his dear sake.

LEWIS MORRIS

OH, IF THOU BE'ST TRUE LOVER

OH, if thou be'st true lover, wash not hand
From that dear stain of Love! from worldly brand
Of wealth and self-love wash it! At the last
Those win who, spite of Fortune's tempests, stand,

Glad to wreck all for Love. I say to thee —
I, Sadi — launch not on that boundless Sea!
But if thou puttest forth, hoist sail, quit anchor,
To storm and wave trust thyself hardily!

EDWIN ARNOLD

FROM "THE CASTLE IN THE AIR"

I LIVE for Love, for Love alone, and who
Dare chide me for it? Who dare call it folly?
It is a holy thing, if aught is holy,
And true, indeed, if Truth herself is true:
Earth yearns for earth, — its sensuous life is dear;
Mortals should love mortality while here,
And seize the glowing hours before they fly;
And eyes should answer eyes, and lips should meet,
And hearts unlocked to kindred hearts should beat,
Till all that live on earth in love should live and die.

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

THE SEA-SHELL

"LISTEN, darling, and tell me
What the murmurer says to thee,
Murmuring 'twixt a song and a moan,
Changing neither tune nor tone."

"Yes, I hear it, — far and faint,
Like thin-drawn prayer of drowsy saint;
Like the falling of sleep on a weary brain,
When the fevered heart is quiet again."

"By smiling lips and fixed eye,
You are hearing more than song or sigh;
The wrinkled thing has curious ways —
I want to know what words it says."

"I hear a wind on a boatless main
Sigh like the last of a vanishing pain;
On the dreaming waters dreams the moon,
But I hear no words in the murmured tune."

"If it does not say that I love thee well,
'T is a senseless, ill-curved, worn-out shell;
If it is not of love, why sigh or sing?
'T is a common, mechanical, useless thing."

"It whispers of love — 'tis a prophet shell —
Of a peace that comes and all shall be well;
It speaks not a word of your love to me,
But it tells me to love you eternally."

GEORGE MACDONALD

GIVE all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse,
Nothing refuse.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

IV.

Am I not the nobler through thy love?
Or three times less unworthy?

ALFRED TENNYSON

If aught can make me seek
Other to be than that lost soul, I fear me,
It is that thou lov'st me; Heaven were not Heaven
Without thee.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

SOFTLY THE EVENING SHADOWS

SOFTLY the evening shadows
Kiss the trailing robes of day;
And clustering round the roses
At my feet, they seem to say,
As the meadows lose their being,
And the lengthened shadows wane:
"Have you done your every duty
Pour l'amour de Madeleine?

"Are you nobler, stronger, better,
Than you were when early dawn
Blazoned all the day with splendor
At the advent of the morn?
Have you sought with manly courage
Some far distant height to gain?
Are your aspirations higher
Pour l'amour de Madeleine?"

DANIEL CHAUNCEY BREWER

SOME LOVER'S DEAR THOUGHT

I OUGHT to be kinder always,
For the light of his kindly eyes;
I ought to be wiser always,
Because he is so just and wise;
And gentler in all my bearing,
And braver in all my daring,
For the patience that in him lies.

I must be as true as the Heaven,
While he is as true as the day,
Nor balance the gift with the given,
For he giveth to me alway.
And I must be firm and steady,
For my Love, he is that already,
And I follow him as I may.

O dear little golden fetter,
You bind me to difficult things;
But my soul, while it strives, grows better,
And I feel the stirring of wings
As I stumble, doubting and dreading,
Up the path of his stronger treading,
Intent on his beckonings.

SARAH WOOLSEY
(SUSAN COOLIDGE)

A FACE

I WANDERED through the night alone;
A face from out the darkness shone,
A garnered flame of beauty given
To guide a blinded soul to Heaven.

O lovely face, with ray divine,
Forever on my pathway shine;
Where'er my wayward footsteps roam,
Be thou my star, my faith, my home!

WILLIAM T. WASHBURN

FROM "THE MISTRESS OF THE MANSE"

HIS love enwrapped her as a robe,
Which seemed by its supernal charm
To shield from every poisoned probe
Of earthly pain and earthly harm
This one choice creature of the globe.

The love he bore her lifted him
Into a bright, sweet atmosphere
That filled with beauty to the brim
The world beneath him, far and near,
And stained the clouds that draped its rim.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND

TO HARRIETT

HERE at the halfway House of Life I linger,
Worn with the way, a weary-hearted singer,
Resting a little space;
And lo! the good God sends me, as a token
Of peace and blessing (else my heart were broken),
The sunbeam of thy face.

My fear falls from me like a garment; slowly
New strength returns upon me, calm and holy;
I kneel, and I atone —
Thy hand is clasped in mine — we lean together —
Henceforward, through the sad or shining weather,
I shall not walk alone.

ROBERT BUCHANAN

FROM "THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE"

THEN to my room
I went, and closed and lock'd the door,
And cast myself down on my bed;
And there, with many a blissful tear,
I vow'd to love, and pray'd to wed
The maiden who had grown so dear;
Thank'd God who had set her in my path,
And promised as I hoped to win,
I never would sully my faith
By the least selfishness or sin;
Whatever in her sight I 'd seem,
I 'd really be; I 'd never blend
With my delight in her a dream
'T would change her cheek to comprehend;
And, if she wished it, I 'd prefer
Another's to my own success;
And always seek the best for her
With unofficious tenderness.

Rising, I breathed a brighter clime,
And found myself all self above,
And, with a charity sublime,
Contemned not those who did not love;
And I could not but feel that then
I shone with something of her grace,
And went forth to my fellow-men
My commendation in my face.

COVENTRY PATMORE

FRIENDSHIP

A RUDDY drop of manly blood
The surging sea outweighs,
The world uncertain comes and goes,
The lover rooted stays
I fancied he was fled, —
And, after many a year,
Glowed unexhausted kindliness,
Like daily sunrise there.
My careful heart was free again;
O friend, my bosom said,
Through thee alone the sky is arched,
Through thee the rose is red;
All things through thee take nobler form,
And look beyond the earth.
The mill-round of our fate appears
A sun-path in thy worth.
Me, too, thy nobleness has taught
To master my despair;
The fountains of my hidden life
Are through thy friendship fair.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

GOD measures souls by their capacity
For entertaining his best angel, Love.
Who loveth most is nearest kin to God,
Who is all Love or nothing.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

HAPPY ARE THEY WHO KISS THEE

HAPPY are they who kiss thee, morn and even,
Parting the hair upon thy forehead white;
For them the sky is bluer and more bright,
And purer their thanksgivings rise to Heaven.
Happy are they to whom thy songs are given;
Happy are they on whom thy hands alight;
And happiest they for whom thy prayers at night
In tender pity so oft have striven.
Away with vain regrets and selfish sighs —
Even I, dear friend, am lonely, not unblest;
Permitted sometimes on that form to gaze,
Or feel the light of those consoling eyes;
If but a moment on my cheek it stays,
I know that gentle beam from all the rest!

AUBREY DE VERE

LOVE, THE MUSICIAN

LOVE is the minstrel; for in God's own sight,
The master of all melody he stands,
And holds a golden rebeck in his hands,
And leads the chorus of the saints in light;
But ever and anon those chambers bright
Detain him not, for down to these low lands
He flies, and spreads his musical commands,
And teaches men some fresh, divine delight.

For with his bow he strikes a single chord
Across a soul, and wakes in it desire
To grow more pure and lovely, and aspire
To that ethereal country where, outpoured
From myriad stars that stand before the Lord,
Love's harmonies are like a flame of fire.

EDMUND W. GOSSE
Italian of Francesco Redi

A FRIENDSHIP

SMALL fellowship of daily commonplace
We hold together, dear, constrained to go
Diverging ways. Yet day by day I know
My life is sweeter for thy life's sweet grace;
And if we meet but for a moment's space,
Thy touch, thy word, sets all the world aglow.
Faith soars serener, haunting doubts shrink low
Abashed before the sunshine of thy face.
Nor press of crowd, nor waste of distance serves
To part us. Every hush of evening brings
Some hint of thee, true-hearted friend of mine;
And as the farther planet thrills and swerves
When toward it through the darkness Saturn swings,
Even so my spirit feels the spell of thine.

SOPHIE JEWETT
(ELLEN BURROUGHS)

I REMEMBER the only wise thing I ever did,
The only good, was to love thee.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

IN THE AIR

THE scent of a blossom from Eden!
The flower was not given to me,
But it freshened my spirit forever,
As it passed, on its way to thee!

In my soul is a lingering music:
The song was not meant for me,
But I listen, and listen, and wonder
To whom it can lovelier be.

The sounds and the scents that float by us —
They cannot tell whither they go;
Yet however it fails of its errand,
Love makes the world sweeter, I know.

I know that love never is wasted,
Nor truth, nor the breath of a prayer;
And the thought that goes forth as a blessing
Must live, as a joy in the air.

LUCY LARCOM

ALL true deep feeling purifies the heart;
Am I not better by my love for you?
At least I am less selfish; I would give
My life to buy you happiness!

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON

SONNET

IF it be true that any beauteous thing
Raises the pure and just desires of man
From earth to God, the eternal Fount of all,
Such I believe my love: for as in her
So fair, in whom I all beside forget,
I view the gentle work of her Creator,
I have no care for any other thing,
Whilst thus I love. Nor is it marvellous,
Since the effect is not of my own power,
If the soul doth, by nature tempted forth,
Enamoured through the eyes,
Repose upon the eyes which it resembleth,
And through them riseth to the primal love,
As to its end, and honors in admiring:
For who adores his Maker must needs love his work.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
Italian of Michael Angelo

GOING TO CHURCH

HER soft voice, singularly heard,
Beside me in the Psalms, withstood
The roar of voices, like a bird
Sole warbling in a windy wood:
And when we knelt, she seemed to be
An angel teaching me to pray;
And all through the high Liturgy
My spirit rejoiced without allay,

Being for once borne clearly above
All banks and bars of ignorance,
By this bright springtide of pure love,
And floated in a free expanse,
Whence it could see from side to side,
The obscurity from every part
Winnow'd away and purified
By the vibrations of my heart.

COVENTRY PATMORE

WITH my love this knowledge too was given,
Which each calm day doth strengthen more and more,
That they who love are but one step from Heaven.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

V.

I meet her on the dusty street,
And daisies spring about her feet;
Or, touched to life beneath her tread,
An English cowslip lifts its head.

HENRY TIMROD

I loved thee for that dear, deep lovingness
Resting within thy tender, brooding eyes;
I loved thee for thy wealth of womanhood,
Thy quiet questionings, thy sweet replies,
Thy patient brows that knew no bitter mood.

GEORGE FRANCIS ARMSTRONG

CALAIS SANDS

A THOUSAND knights have reined their steeds
To watch this line of sand hills run
Along the never silent Strait,
To Calais glittering in the sun.

To look toward Ardres' Golden Field
Across this wide aerial plain,
Which glows as if the Middle Age
Were gorgeous upon earth again.

Oh, that to share this famous scene
I saw, upon the open sand,
Thy lovely presence at my side,
Thy shawl, thy look, thy smile, thy hand!

How exquisite thy voice would come,
My darling, on this lonely air!
How sweetly would the fresh sea-breeze
Shake loose some locks of soft brown hair!

But now my glance but once hath roved
O'er Calais and its famous plain;
To England's cliffs my gaze is turned,
O'er the blue Strait mine eyes I strain.

Thou comest! Yes, the vessels' cloud
Hangs dark upon the rolling sea! —
Oh, that yon sea-bird's wings were mine,
To win one instant's glimpse from thee!

I must not spring to grasp thy hand,
To woo thy smile, to seek thine eye;
But I may stand far off, and gaze,
And watch thee pass unconscious by,

And spell thy looks, and guess thy thoughts,
Mixed with the idlers on the pier, —
Ah, might I always rest unseen,
So I might have thee always near!

To-morrow hurry through the fields
Of Flanders to the storied Rhine!
To-night those soft-fringed eyes shall close
Beneath one roof, my queen! with mine.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

TYING HER BONNET UNDER HER CHIN

TYING her bonnet under her chin,
She tied her raven ringlets in;
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

They were strolling together up the hill,
Where the wind comes blowing merry and chill;
And it blew the curls a frolicsome race
All over the happy peach-colored face,
Till, scolding and laughing, she tied them in,
Under her beautiful, dimpled chin.

And it blew a color, bright as the bloom
Of the pinkest fuchsia's tossing plume,
All over the cheeks of the prettiest girl
That ever imprisoned a romping curl,
Or, tying her bonnet under her chin,
Tied a young man's heart within.

Steeper and steeper grew the hill;
Madder, merrier, chillier, still
The western wind blew down and played
The wildest tricks with the little maid,
As, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

O western wind, do you think it was fair
To play such tricks with the floating hair?
To gladly, gleefully, do your best
To blow her against the young man's breast,
Where he as gladly folded her in,
And kissed her mouth and dimpled chin?

Ah! Ellery Vane, you little thought
An hour ago, when you besought
This country lass to walk with you,
After the sun had dried the dew,
What perilous danger you 'd be in
As she tied her bonnet under her chin.

NORA PERRY

LOVE ON DECK

"I NEVER loved you much," she said,
"But I wanted to pass the time.
The hours pass slow on a ship, you know,
In a lazy, tropical clime.
Have I hurt you much? Forgive me, then,
If I own that I was wrong.
Cure the smart, and heal your heart,
By writing it all in a song."
The waves flowed free, and the waves flowed wide,
As they sat and whispered side by side.

"I never cared much for you," he said,
"But I wanted a subject fit.
I 'd verses to make, and I thought I could take
Your heart and model from it.
Have I pained you much? Forgive me, dear.
A ship is a dreary place;
It is wrong to flirt, but you are n't much hurt,
And you *have* a lovely face!"
The waves flowed free, and the waves flowed strong,
And the good ship bore them both along.

Each looked at each. They did not smile:
The tears were in either's eyes.
And the cliffs of England rose the while
From the waves, a white surprise.

Hand sought for hand, — "Shall we gravely end
What first was a freak of the heart?
Shall we meet once more on the English shore,
But this time never to part?"
The cliffs rose white from the sunny seas,
And church-bells sounded on the breeze.

GEORGE BARLOW

A RED, RED ROSE

OH, my luve 's like a red, red rose,
That 's newly sprung in June:
Oh, my luve 's like the melodie
That 's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt in the sun,
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

ROBERT BURNS

IN A GONDOLA

I.

'T WAS night in Venice. Then down to the tide,
Where a tall and shadowy gondolier
Leaned on his oar, like a lifted spear: —
'T was night in Venice. Then side by side
We sat in his boat. Then oar a-trip
On the black boat's keel, then dip and dip: —
These boatmen should build their boats more wide,
For we were together and side by side.

II.

The sea it was level as seas of light,
As still as the light ere a hand was laid
To the making of lands, or the seas were made.
'T was fond as a bride on her bridal night,
When a great love swells in her soul like a sea,
And makes her but less than divinity.
'T was night, — the soul of the day I wis:
A woman's face hiding from her first kiss.

III.

'T was night in Venice. On o'er the tide —
These boats they are narrow as they can be;
These crafts they are narrow enough, and we,
To balance the boat, sat side by side —
Out under the arch of the Bridge of Sighs,
On under the arch of the star-sown skies;
We two were together on the Adrian Sea, —
The one fair woman of the world to me.

IV.

These narrow-built boats, they rock when at sea,
And they make one afraid. So she leaned to me;
And that is the reason alone there fell
Such golden folds of abundant hair
Down over my shoulder, as we sat there.
These boatmen should build their boats more wide,
Wider for lovers: as wide — ah, well!
But who is the rascal to kiss and tell?

JOAQUIN MILLER

A NICE CORRESPONDENT

THE glow and the glory are plighted
To darkness, for evening is come;
The lamp in Glebe Cottage is lighted,
The birds and the sheep-bells are dumb.
I 'm alone, for the others have flitted
To dine with a neighbor at Kew;
Alone, but I 'm not to be pitied, —
I 'm thinking of you!

I wish you were here! Were I duller
Than dull, you 'd be dearer than dear;
I 'm drest in your favorite color, —
Dear Fred, how I wish you were here!
I 'm wearing my lazuli necklace,
The necklace you fasten'd askew;
Was there ever so rude or so reckless
A darling as you?

I want you to come and pass sentence
On two or three books with a plot:
Of course you know "Janet's Repentance"?
I 'm reading Sir Waverley Scott.
That story of Edgar and Lucy,
How thrilling, romantic, and true!
The Master (his bride *was* a goosey!)
Reminds me of you.

They tell me Cockaigne has been crowning
A Poet whose garland endures;
It was you that first told me of Browning, —
That stupid old Browning of yours!
His vogue and his verve are alarming,
I 'm anxious to give him his due,
But, Fred, he 's not nearly so charming
A poet as you!

I heard how you shot at The Beeches
I saw how you rode Chanticleer,
I have read the report of your speeches,
And echoed the echoing cheer.
There 's a whisper of hearts you are breaking,
Dear Fred, I believe it, I do!
Small marvel that Folly is making
Her idol of you.

Alas for the world, and its dearly
Bought triumph, its fugitive bliss;
Sometimes I half wish I were merely
A plain or a penniless miss;

But, perhaps, one is blest with "a measure
Of pelf," and I 'm not sorry, too,
That I 'm pretty, because 't is a pleasure,
My dearest, to you!

Your whim is for frolic and fashion,
Your taste is for letters and art: —
This rhyme is the commonplace passion
That glows in a fond woman's heart;
Lay it by in some sacred deposit
For relics, — we all have a few!
Love, some day they 'll print it, because it
Was written to you.

FREDERICK LOCKER

THE CLOVER BLOSSOMS

THE clover blossoms kiss her feet,
She is so sweet,
While I who may not kiss her hand
Bless all the wild flowers in the land.

Soft sunshine falls across her breast,
She is so blest,
I 'm jealous of its arms of gold;
Oh that these arms her form might fold!

Gently the breezes kiss her hair,
She is so fair!
Let flowers and sun and breeze go by,
O dearest! Love me or I die.

OSCAR LAIGHTON

ANNIE LAURIE

MAXWELTON braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it 's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true, —
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I 'd lay me doune and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw-drift
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on, —
That e'er the sun shone on, —
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I 'd lay me doune and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
And like winds in summer sighing
Her voice is low and sweet —
Her voice is low and sweet —
And she 's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I 'd lay me doune and dee.

DOUGLAS

UNDER THE ROSE

SHE wears a rose in her hair,
At the twilight's dreamy close;
Her face is fair, *how* fair
Under the rose!

I steal like a shadow there,
As she sits in rapt repose,
And whisper my loving prayer
Under the rose!

She takes the rose from her hair,
And her color comes and goes;
And I — a lover will dare
Under the rose!

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

A LOVE EXTRAVAGANZA

GROW greener, grass, where the river flows —
Her feet have pressed you:
Blow fresher, violet! lily! rose!
Her eyes have blessed you.
Sing sweeter, birds upon the trees,
Her ears have heard you:
Sound up to heaven, ye harmonies!
Her hands have stirred you.

CHARLES MACKAY

THE SMILE OF HER I LOVE

THE smile of her I love is like the dawn
Whose touch makes Memnon sing;
Oh, see where wide the golden sunlight flows —
The barren desert blossoms as the rose!

The smile of her I love — when that is gone,
O'er all the world night spreads her shadowy wing.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

LOVE'S PRAYER

IF Heaven would hear my prayer,
My dearest wish would be,
Thy sorrows not to share,
But take them all on me;
If Heaven would hear my prayer.

I 'd beg with prayers and sighs
That never a tear might flow
From out thy lovely eyes,
If Heaven might grant it so;
Mine be the tears and sighs.

No cloud thy brow should cover,
But smiles each other chase
From lips to eyes all over
Thy sweet and sunny face;
The clouds my heart should cover.

That all thy path be light
  Let darkness fall on me;
If all thy days be bright,
  Mine black as night could be;
My love would light my night.

For thou art more than life,
  And if our faith should set
Life and my love at strife,
  How could I then forget
I love thee more than life?

JOHN HAY

LOVE

I LEANED out of window, I smelt the white clover,
  Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate;
"Now if there be footsteps, he comes, my one lover —
  Hush, nightingale, hush! O sweet nightingale, wait
    Till I listen and hear
    If a step draweth near,
    For my love he is late!

"The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
  A cluster of stars hangs like fruit in the tree,
The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer;
  To what art thou listening, and what dost thou see?
    Let the star-clusters grow,
    Let the sweet waters flow,
    And cross quickly to me.

"You night-moths that hover where honey brims over
From sycamore blossoms, or settle or sleep;
You glow-worms, shine out and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.
Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep —

"Too deep for swift telling; and yet, my one lover,
I 've conned thee an answer, it waits thee to-night."
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took flight;
But I 'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

JEAN INGELOW

THE cords of love must be strong as death
Which hold and keep a heart,
Not daisy-chains, that snap in the breeze,
Or break with their weight apart.

PHŒBE CARY

VI

I love you. Words are small;
'T is life speaks plain: In twenty years
Perhaps you may know all.

DINAH MARIA MULOCH CRAIK

I LOVE YOU, DEAR

"I LOVE you, dear!" and saying this,
My heart responds, "'T is true! 't is true!"
And thrills with more than earthly bliss
While still I say, "I love but you!"

"Why should I love you, dear?" you ask,
As tho' true love could reason why;
If love could think, 't would be a task
For me to love, and love would die.

I love you just because I do,
The key I do not care to find,
For fear the strands would break in two
That me a willing captive bind.

The fact is all I want to know,
I will not grieve while that is given;
To lose my love would be my woe;
To keep it as it is, is heaven.

GEORGE W. CROFTS

"I'M sorry that I spelt the word,
I hate to go above you,
Because" — the brown eyes lower fell —
"Because, you see, I love you!"

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

THE SWEETEST FLOWER THAT BLOWS

THE sweetest flower that blows
I give you as we part;
For you it is a rose;
For me it is my heart.

The fragrance it exhales
(Ah, if you only knew!),
Which but in dying fails,
It is my love of you.

The sweetest flower that grows
I give you as we part;
You think it but a rose;
Ah, me! it is my heart.

FREDERICK PETERSON

I LOVE THEE

I LOVE thee — I love thee!
'T is all that I can say;
It is my vision in the night,
My dreaming in the day;
The very echo of my heart,
The blessing when I pray.
I love thee — I love thee!
Is all that I can say.

I love thee — I love thee!
Is ever on my tongue.
In all my proudest poesy
That chorus still is sung;
It is the verdict of my eyes
Amidst the gay and young:
I love thee — I love thee!
A thousand maids among.

I love thee — I love thee!
Thy bright and hazel glance,
The mellow lute upon those lips,
Whose tender tones entrance.
But most dear heart of hearts, thy proofs,
That still these words enhance!
I love thee — I love thee!
Whatever be thy chance.

THOMAS HOOD

SONG FROM A DRAMA

I KNOW not if moonlight or starlight
Be soft on the land and the sea, —
I catch but the near light, the far light,
Of eyes that are beaming for me;
The scent of the night, of the roses,
May burden the air for thee, Sweet, —
'T is only the breath of thy sighing
I know as I lie at thy feet.

The winds may be sobbing or singing,
  Their touch may be fervent or cold,
The night bells may toll or be ringing, —
  I care not while thee I enfold!
The feast may go on, and the music
  Be scattered in ecstasy round, —
Thy whisper, "I love thee! I love thee!"
  Hath flooded my soul with its sound.

I think not of time that is flying,
  How short is the hour I have won,
How near is this living to dying,
  How the shadow still follows the sun;
There is naught upon earth, no desire
  Worth a thought, though 't were had by a sign!
I love thee! I love thee! bring nigher
  Thy spirit, thy kisses, to mine.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

WHAT love do I bring you? The earth
  Full of love were far lighter;
The great hollow sky full of love
  Something slighter.

Earth full and heaven full were less
  Than the full measure given:
Nay, say a heart full, — the heart
  Holds earth and heaven!

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD

SONNET

Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona. — DANTE
Amor m'addusse in si gioiosa spene. — PETRARCA

O MY heart's heart and you who are to me
More than myself myself, God be with you,
Keep you in strong obedience, leal and true
To him whose noble service setteth free,
Give you all good we see or can foresee,
Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
So much for you; but what for me, dear friend?
To love you without stint and all I can
To-day, to-morrow, world without an end:
To love you much, and yet to love you more,
As Jordan at its flood sweeps either shore;
Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

BECAUSE

IT is not because your heart is mine — mine only —
Mine alone,
It is not because you choose me weak and lonely
For your own;
Not because the earth is fairer, and the skies
Spread above you
Are more radiant for the shining of your eyes —
That I love you!

It is not because the world's perplexèd meaning
Grows more clear;
And the Parapets of Heaven, with angels leaning,
Seem more near;
And Nature sings of praise with all her voices
Since yours spoke,
Since within my silent heart, that now rejoices,
Love awoke!

Nay, not even because your hand holds heart and life,
At your will
Soothing, hushing all its discord, making strife
Calm and still;
Teaching Trust to fold her wings, nor ever roam
From her nest;
Teaching Love that her securest, safest home
Must be Rest.

But because this human Love, though true and sweet, —
Yours and mine, —
Has been sent by Love more tender, more complete,
More divine,
That it leads our hearts to rest at last in Heaven,
Far above you;
Do I take you as a gift that God has given —
And I love you!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

ONE FACE

ONE face looks up from every page,
From snowy cloud or tranquil sea;
One face that can all woes assuage,
Dearer than all the world to me.

The eyes are mild, the brow is fair;
The voice is sweet as song of bird:
How oft my hand upon the hair
Has rested with no spoken word!

The years will come and go again;
Their joys and sorrows they will trace
On lip, and brow, and busy brain, —
And heaven will hold that one dear face.

SARA K. BOLTON

FROM "THE CUP OF YOUTH"

GASPAR.

TELL me again you love me.

GELOSA.

Small my need,
'T is in my eyes; 't is on my lips; my heart
Beats to this music all the long day through,
I am like a bird that hath one only note
For song, for prayer, for thanks, for everything.

GASPAR.

You cannot know how passing sweet it is
To change the camp, the field, the storms of war
For this and you: to watch the gray morn wane,
And see the slumbrous sea leap here and there
To silver dreams.

GELOSA.

The hand of time seems stayed,
And joy to own the ever constant hours,
So full of still assurance is the night.
Love hath the quiet certainty of Heaven
Rich with the promise of unchanging years.

S. WEIR MITCHELL

A LOVE SYMPHONY

ALONG the garden ways just now
I heard the flowers speak.
The white rose told me of your brow,
The red rose of your cheek:
The lily of your bended head,
The bindweed of your hair;
Each looked his loveliest and said
You were more fair.

I went into the wood anon,
And heard the wild birds sing
How sweet you were; they warbled on,
Piped, trilled the self-same thing.

Thrush, blackbird, linnet without pause,
The burden did repeat;
And still began again because
You were more sweet.

And then I went down to the sea,
And heard it murmuring too
Part of an ancient mystery,
All made of me and you,
How many a thousand years ago
I loved, and you were sweet —
Longer I could not stay, and so
I fled back to your feet.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY

FROM "THE ANCESTRESS"

I HAVE no hope that does not dream of thee;
I have no joy that is not shared by thee;
I have no fear that does not dread for thee.
All that I once took pleasure in, — my lute
Is only sweet when it repeats thy name;
My flowers — I only gather them for thee.
The book drops listless down, — I cannot read,
Unless it is to thee; my lonely hours
Are spent in shaping forth our future lives
After my own romantic fantasies.
He is the star round which my thoughts revolve
Like satellites.

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON

FOUR WORDS

BELOVED, the briefest words are best;
And all the fine euphonious ways
In which the truth has been expressed
Since Adam's early Eden days,
Could never match the simple phrase, —
Sweetheart, I love you!

If I should say the world were blank
Without your face; if I should call
The stars to witness, rank on rank,
That I am true although they fall, —
'T would mean but this, — and this means all, —
Sweetheart, I love you!

And so, whatever change is wrought
By time or fate, delight or dole,
One single, happy, helpful thought
Makes strong and calm my steady soul,
And these sweet words contain the whole, —
Sweetheart, I love you!

I will not wrong their truth to-day
By wild, impassioned vows of faith,
Since all that volumes could convey
Is compassed thus in half a breath,
Which holds and hallows life and death, —
Sweetheart, I love you!

ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN

URVASI

'T IS a story told by Kalidasa, —
Hindoo poet, — in melodious rhyme,
How, with train of maidens, young Urvasi
Came to keep great Indra's festal time.

'T was her part in worshipful confession
Of the god-name on that sacred day,
Walking flower-crowned in the long procession,
I love Puru-shotta-ma, to say.

Pure as snow on Himalayan ranges,
Heaven-descended, soon to heaven withdrawn,
Fairer than the moon-flower of the Ganges
Was Urvasi, daughter of the Dawn.

But it happened that the gentle maiden
Loved one Puru-Avas, — fateful name! —
And her heart, with its sweet secret laden,
Faltered when her time of utterance came.

"I love" — then she stopped, and people wondered;
"I love" — she must guard her secret well;
Then from sweetest lips that ever blundered
"I love Puru-Avas," trembling fell.

Oh what terror seized on poor Urvasi!
Misty grew the violets of her eyes,
And her form bent like a broken daisy,
While around her rose the mocking cries.

But great Indra said, "The maid shall marry
Him whose image in her faithful heart
She so near to that of God doth carry,
Scarce her lips can keep their names apart."

Call it then not weakness or dissembling
If, in striving the high name to reach,
Through our voices runs the tender trembling
Of an earthly name too dear for speech!

Ever dwells the lesser in the greater,
In God's love the human; we by these
Know He holds love's simplest stammering sweeter
Than cold praise of wordy Pharisees.

HELEN BARRON BOSTWICK

PROTESTATIONS

IF the apple grow on the apple-tree,
And the wild wind blow o'er the wild wood free,
And the dark stream flow to the darker sea,
And they all had ceased growing and blowing and flowing,
I cannot help loving thee! I cannot help loving thee!
As flows the dark blue stream to the deeper sea,
I cannot help loving thee! I cannot help loving thee!

Yet if wild winds blow never more on lea,
And ne'er blossoms grow on the healthy tree,
And the faithless stream flow not to the sea,
And they all should cease blowing and growing and flowing,
I 'll never cease loving thee! I 'll never cease loving thee!
As flows the dark blue stream to the deeper sea,
I 'll never cease loving thee! I 'll never cease loving thee!

CHARLES MACKAY

FROM "THE SPANISH STUDENT"

PRECIOSA.

I LOVE thee as the good love heaven;
But not that I am worthy of that heaven.
How shall I more deserve it?

VICTORIAN.

Loving more.

PRECIOSA.

I cannot love thee more; my heart is full.

VICTORIAN.

Then let it overflow, and I will drink it,
As in the summer-time the thirsty sands
Drink the swift waters of the Manzanares,
And still do thirst for more.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

BENEDICITE

GOD'S love and peace be with thee, where
Soe'er this soft autumnal air
Lifts the dark tresses of thy hair!

Whether through city casements comes
Its kiss to thee, in crowded rooms,
Or out among the woodland blooms,

It freshens o'er thy thoughtful face,
Imparting, in its glad embrace,
Beauty to beauty, grace to grace!

Fair Nature's book together read,
The old wood-paths that knew our tread,
The maple shadows overhead,

The hills we climbed, the river seen
By gleams along its deep ravine, —
All keep thy memory fresh and green.

Where'er I look, where'er I stray,
Thy thought goes with me on my way,
And hence the prayer I breathe to-day;

O'er lapse of time and change of scene,
The weary waste which lies between
Thyself and me, my heart I lean.

Thou lack'st not friendship's spell-word, nor
The half unconscious power to draw
All hearts to thine by love's sweet law.

With these good gifts of God is cast
Thy lot, and many a charm thou hast
To hold the blessed angels fast.

If, then, a fervent wish for thee
The gracious heavens will heed from me,
What should, dear heart, its burden be?

The sighing of a shaken reed, —
What can I more than meekly plead
The greatness of our common need?

God's love, — unchanging, pure, and true, —
The paraclete white shining through
His peace, — the fall of Hermon's dew!

With such a prayer on this sweet day,
As thou mayest hear and I may say,
I greet thee, dearest, far away!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

VII.

It has been such a day as that, thou knowest, when first
I said I loved thee; that long, sunny day
We passed upon the waters, — heeding naught,
Seeing naught but each other.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

Not from the whole wide world I choose thee, —
Sweetheart, light of the land and the sea!
The wide, wide world could not enclose thee,
For thou art the whole wide world to me.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

WHAT THE ROSE SAW

THE ROSE.

OH, Lily sweet, I saw a pleasant sight.

THE LILY.

Where saw you it, and when?

THE ROSE.

Here, when the night
Lay calmly over all and covered us,
And no wind blew, however tremulous,
I heard afar the light fall of her feet
And murmur of her raiment soft and sweet.

THE LILY.

What said she to thee when she came anear?

THE ROSE.

No word, but o'er me bent till I could hear
The beating of her heart, and feel her blood
Swell to a blossom that which was a bud.
Alas, I have no words to tell the bliss
When on my trembling petals fell her kiss;
Sweeter than soft rain falling after heat,
Or dew at dawn, was that kiss soft and sweet.
Then fell another shadow on the ground,
And for a little space there was no sound:
I knew who stood beside her, saw his face
Shining and happy in that happy place.
I know not what they said; but this I know
They kissed and passed: where think you did they go?

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON

LOVERS

A CRASH of boughs! — one through them breaking!
Mercy is startled, and fain would fly,
But e'en as she turns, her steps o'ertaking,
He pleads with her, "Mercy, it is but I!

"Mercy!" he touches her hand unbidden, —
"The air is balmy, I pray you stay, —
Mercy?" Her downcast eyes are hidden.
And never a word she has to say,

Till closer drawn, her prison'd fingers
He takes to his lips with a yearning strong;
And she murmurs low, that late she lingers,
Her mother will want her and think her long.

"Good mother is she! then honor duly
The lightest wish in her heart that stirs;
But there is a bond yet dearer truly,
And there is a love that passeth hers.

"Mercy, Mercy!" Her heart attendeth, —
Love's birthday blush on her brow lies sweet;
She turns her face when his own he bendeth,
And the lips of the youth and the maiden meet.

JEAN INGELOW

FROM "LIFE'S MYSTERIES"

AH, how the colder pulse still starts
To think of that one hour sublime,
We hugged heaven down into our hearts,
And clutched eternity in time!

When love's dear eyes first looked in ours,
When love's dear brows were strange to frowns,
When all the stars were burning flowers
That we might pluck and wear for crowns.

ALICE CARY

FROM "THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER"

THEN, in that time and place, I spoke to her,
Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved;
And in that time and place she answered me
And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,
The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering "I am thine."

ALFRED TENNYSON

WON'T YOU

DO you remember when you heard
My lips breathe love's first faltering word?
You do, sweet — don't you?
When, having wandered all the day,
Linked arm in arm I dared to say,
You 'll love me — won't you?

And when you blushed, and could not speak,
I fondly kissed your glowing cheek;
Did that affront you?
Oh, surely not; your eye exprest
No wrath, but said, perhaps in jest,
"You 'll love me — won't you?"

I 'm sure my eyes replied, "I will;"
And you believe that promise still;
You do, sweet — don't you?
Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You 'll love me — won't you?

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY

KISS ME SOFTLY

KISS me softly and speak to me low, —
Malice has ever a vigilant ear;
What if malice were lurking near?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low, —
Envy too has a watchful ear;
What if envy should chance to hear?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low, —
Trust me, darling, the time is near
When lovers may love with never a fear, —
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

JOHN GODFREY SAXE

PROPOSAL

THE violet loves a sunny bank,
The cowslip loves the lea,
The scarlet creeper loves the elm;
But I love — thee.

The sunshine kisses mount and vale,
The stars, they kiss the sea,
The west winds kiss the clover bloom,
But I kiss — thee.

The oriole weds his mottled mate,
The lily 's bride o' the bee;
Heaven's marriage ring is round the earth —
Shall I wed thee?

BAYARD TAYLOR

FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

"IF one find a four-leaf clover"
(She said, sitting on the grass),
"He can wish whate'er he likes to, —
And that wish shall come to pass."

"Do you say so?" then down kneeling
'Mong the sorrel and cropt grass,
Looked I for a four-leaf clover
And my wish to come to pass.

Long I searched among the sorrel,
Close beside me she searched too;
Now and then some commonplaces
Broke the silence, — but it grew.

For my heart was full of yearning,
And my mouth of eager words,
But I dared not give them utterance, —
So I hearkened to the birds;

And kept looking, looking, looking,
While beside me she looked too —
Two bent figures in the twilight,
Green hills paling into blue.

"Ha, I have one!" "Yes, and wished for?"
"You, and shall it be?" I cried,
Eyes cast down she asked demurely,
"Hath the clover not replied?"

GEORGE HOUGHTON

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle —
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea, —
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

THE cup of love the hands of two hold.

LUCY LARCOM

INDEED I love thee: come
Yield thyself up; my hopes and thine are one.
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;
Lay thy sweet hand in mine and trust to me.

ALFRED TENNYSON

FROM "QUEEN MARY"

The Happiest Hour.

IT was Maytime,
And I was walking with the man I loved, —
I loved him, but I thought I was not loved;
And both were silent, letting the wild brook
Speak for us, till he stoop'd and gathered one
From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me and gave it me.
I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once
I felt his arm about me, and his lips.

ALFRED TENNYSON

EVENING SONG

LOOK off, dear Love, across the sallow sands,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea;
How long they kiss in sight of all the lands —
Ah, longer, longer, we!

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra night drinks all. 'T is done,
Love, lay thine hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart;
Glimmer, ye waves, round else unlighted sands.
O Night! divorce our sun and sky apart, —
Never our lips, our hands.

SIDNEY LANIER

VIII.

A weak white girl
Held all his heartstrings in her small white hand;
His youth, and power, and majesty were hers,
And not his own.

JEAN INGELOW

So these lives that had run thus far in separate channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flowing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and nearer,
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the other.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

MARRIAGE

THEN before all they stand, — the holy vow
And ring of gold, no fond illusions now,
Bind her as his. Across the threshold led,
And every tear kissed off as soon as shed,
His house she enters, — there to be a light,
Shining within, when all without is night;
A guardian angel o'er his life presiding;
Doubling his pleasures and his cares dividing,
Winning him back when mingling in the throng,
Back from a world we love, alas! too long,
To fireside happiness, to hours of ease,
Blest with that charm, — the certainty to please.
How oft her eyes read his; her gentle mind
To all his wishes, all his thoughts inclined;
Still subject, — ever on the watch to borrow
Mirth of his mirth and sorrow of his sorrow!
The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
Till waked and kindled by the master's spell,
And feeling hearts — touch them but rightly — pour
A thousand melodies unheard before.

SAMUEL ROGERS

HAPPY, happier far than thou
With the laurel on thy brow,
She that makes the humblest hearth
Lovely but to one on earth.

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

THE LITTLE BROWN CABIN

I DREAM of it, tossing about in my skiff,
The little brown cabin just under the cliff;
The wild rose blown in at the window I see,
And Rose at the door, looking out after me;
My sweetheart, my wife,
The Rose of my life!

The sun in the doorway strikes gold from her hair:
The breeze fills the little brown house with salt air,
And she leans to its breath, as if over the sea
It were bringing a kiss and a message from me;
My pretty wild Rose,
The sweetest that grows!

I have not one wish from my darling apart:
The thought of her sweetens my soul and my heart;
And my boat like a bird flies across the blue sea
To the little brown cabin where Rose waits for me,
The Rose of my life,
My own blessed wife!

LUCY LARCOM

SUMMER

NOW sinks the summer sun into the sea;
Sure never such a sunset shone as this,
That on its golden wing has borne such bliss,
Dear Love, to thee and me.

Ah, life was drear and lonely, missing thee,
Though what my loss I did not then divine;
But all is past, — the sweet words, thou art mine,
Make bliss for thee and me.

How swells the light breeze o'er the blossoming lea,
Sure never winds swept past so sweet and low,
No lonely, unblest future waiteth now,
Dear Love, for thee and me.

Look upward o'er the glowing west, and see,
Surely the star of evening never shone
With such a holy radiance — oh, my own,
Heaven smiles on thee and me.

MARIETTA HOLLEY

SHE WAS MINE

"THY tears o'erprize thy loss! Thy wife
In what was she particular?
Others of comely face and life,
Others as chaste and warm there are,
And when they speak they seem to sing;
Beyond her sex she was not wise;
And there is no more common thing
Than kindness in a woman's eyes.
Then wherefore weep so long and fast,
Why so exceedingly repine?
Say, how has thy Beloved surpass'd
So much all others?" "She was mine."

COVENTRY PATMORE

HOME.

TWO birds within one nest;
Two hearts within one breast;
Two spirits in one fair,
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win,
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

DORA GREENWELL

FOR THOUGHTS

A PANSY on his breast she laid,
Splendid and dark with Tyrian dyes,
"Take it, 't is like your tender eyes,
Deep as the midnight heaven," she said.

The rich rose mantling in her cheek,
Before him like the dawn she stood,
Pausing upon life's height, subdued,
Yet triumphing, both proud and meek;

And white as winter stars, intense
With steadfast fire, his brilliant face
Bent toward her with an eager grace,
Pale with a rapture half suspense.

"You give me then a thought, O sweet!"
He cried, and kissed the purple flower,
And bowed by Love's resistless power
Trembling he sank before her feet.

She crowned his beautiful bowed head
With one caress of her white hand;
"Rise up, my flower of all the land;
For all my thoughts are yours," she said.

CELIA THAXTER

THE TWO ANCHORS

IT was a gallant sailor man,
Had just come home from sea,
And, as I passed him in the town
He sang "Ahoy!" to me.
I stopped, and saw I knew the man,—
Had known him from a boy;
And so I answered, sailor-like,
"Avast!" to his "Ahoy!"
I made a song for him one day,—
His ship was then in sight,—
"The little anchor on the left
The great one on the right."

I gave his hand a hearty grip,
"So you are back again?
They say you have been pirating
Upon the Spanish main,
Or was it some rich Indiaman
You robbed of all her pearls?

Of course you have been breaking hearts
Of poor Kanaka girls!"
"Wherever I have been," he said,
"I kept my ship in sight, —
'The little anchor on the left,
The great one on the right.'"

"I heard last night that you were in,
I walked the wharves to-day,
But saw no ship that looked like yours;
Where does the good ship lay?
I want to go on board of her."
"And so you shall," said he;
"But there are many things to do
When one comes home from sea.
You know the song you made for me?
I sing it day and night, —
'The little anchor on the left,
The great one on the right.'"

"But how 's your wife and little one?"
"Come home with me," he said.
"Go on, go on; I follow you."
I followed where he led.
He had a pleasant little house;
The door was open wide,
And at the door the dearest face —
A dearer one inside.
He hugged his wife and child; he sang,
His spirits were so light,
"The little anchor on the left,
The great one on the right."

'T was supper-time, and we sat down,
The sailor's wife and child
And he and I; he looked at them,
And looked at me, and smiled.
"I think of this when I am tossed
Upon the stormy foam,
And though a thousand leagues away,
I am anchored here at home."
Then, giving each a kiss, he said,
"I see in dreams at night
This little anchor on my left,
This great one on my right."

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

AND in that twilight hush, God drew their hearts
Indissolubly close. For what is love
But his most perfect weaving, — intertwine
Of the soul's deathless fibres threading in
Our human lives, one weft with the divine.

LUCY LARCOM

FOR there are two heavens, sweet,
Both made of love, — one, inconceivable
Ev'n by the other, so divine it is;
The other, far on this side of the stars,
By men called home.

LEIGH HUNT

ON A CYCLAMEN

Plucked at Cana of Galilee and presented to a bride.

ONLY a flower! but, dear, it grew
On the green mountains which en-ring
Kana-el-Jelîl; looking to
The village and the little spring!

The Love which did those bridals bless
Ever and ever on you shine!
Make happier all your happiness,
And turn its water into wine!

EDWIN ARNOLD

FROM "THE HANGING OF THE CRANE"

O FORTUNATE, O happy day,
When a new household finds its place
Among the myriad homes of earth,
Like a new star just sprung to birth,
And rolled on its harmonious way
Into the boundless realms of space!

. . . . .

For two alone, there in the hall,
Is spread the table round and small;
Upon the polished silver shine
The evening lamps; but, more divine,
The light of love shines over all;
Of love that says not mine and thine,
But ours, for ours is mine and thine.

They want no guests, to come between
Their tender glances like a screen,
And tell them tales of land and sea,
And whatsoever may betide
The great, forgotten world outside;
They want no guests; they needs must be
Each other's own best company.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

TWO LOVERS

TWO lovers by a moss-grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.
O budding time!
O love's best prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carollings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent;
Two hands above the head were locked;
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide,
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said: "Once more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

GEORGE ELIOT

WHERE we love is home,
Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts,
Though o'er us shines the jasper-lighted dome: —
The chain may lengthen but it never parts!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

IX.

O lady, there be many things
That seem right fair, below, above;
But sure not one among them all
Is half so sweet as love.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

LOVE TOOK ME SOFTLY BY THE HAND

LOVE took me softly by the hand,
Love led me all the country o'er,
And showed me beauty in the land,
That I had never dreamt before,
Never before, O Love! sweet Love!

There was a glory in the morn,
There was a calmness in the night,
A mildness by the south wind borne,
That I had never felt aright,
Never aright, O Love! sweet Love!

But now it cannot pass away,
I see it wheresoe'er I go,
And in my heart by night and day,
Its gladness waveth to and fro,
By night and day, O Love! sweet Love!

WALTER R. CASSELS

SOMETHING the heart must have to cherish,
Must love and joy and sorrow learn,
Something with passion clasp, or perish,
And in itself to ashes burn.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I KNOW MYSELF THE BEST BELOVED OF ALL

I KNOW myself the best beloved of all
The many dear to him; yet not indeed
Because of his swift thought for every need
Of my love's craving; I could scarcely call
My very own the power to enthrall
Such chivalry as his, that turns to heed
Each slightest claim, nor thinks to ask the meed
Of Love returned where Love's sweet offerings fall.
Not then because of all he is to me;
But by this surer token: when he earns
The right to his own happiness, or yearns
For some sweet, sudden, answering sympathy,
Ah me! with what quick-beating heart I see
For his own joy it is to me he turns!

ALICE WELLINGTON ROLLINS

OH, THAT WE TWO WERE MAYING

OH, that we two were Maying,
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing,
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh, that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town.

Oh, that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

THREE KISSES

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write,
And ever since it grew more clean and white, —
Slow to world-greetings, — quick with its "Oh, list!"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here plainer to my sight
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, with love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state! since when, indeed
I have been proud and said, "My Love, my own."

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

WITH what a graceful tenderness he loves!
And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!
Complacency, and truth, and manly sweetness
Dwell ever on his tongue and smooth his thoughts.

JOSEPH ADDISON

MY LETTERS

MY letters all dead paper — mute and white! —
And yet they seem alive and quivering
Against my tremulous hands which loose the string
And let them drop down on my knee to-night.
This said — He wished to have me in his sight
Once, as a friend; this fixed a day in spring
To come and touch my hand, — a simple thing,
Yet I wept for it! — this — the paper's light —
Said, *Dear, I love thee;* and I sank and quailed,
As if God's future thundered on my past;
This said, *I am thine*, — and so its ink has paled
With lying at my heart, that beat too fast;
And this — O Love, thy words have ill availed,
If what this said I dared repeat at last!

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

MAY AND LOVE.

MAY in the woods and in my heart,
And we beside the river;
King love between us flying
Said, "Children, love forever."

I heard him, and I thought she heard,
Her lips began to quiver,
And so I shyly kissed her;
Love laughed along the river!

STOPFORD A. BROOKE

FROM "IN THE GARDEN"

AND *this* is Love! until this hour
I never lived; but like a flower
Close prest i' the bud, with sleeping senses,
I drank the dark dim influences
Of sunlight, moonlight, shade, and dew.
At last I open, thrilling thro'
With Love's strange scent, which seemeth part
Of the warm life within my heart,
Part of the air I breathe — O bliss!
Was ever night so sweet as this?
It is enough to breathe, to be,
As if one were a flower, a tree;
A leaf o' the bough, just stirring light
With the warm breathing of the night!

ROBERT BUCHANAN

I DID hear you talk
Far above singing; after you were gone,
I grew acquainted with my heart, and searched
What stirred it so. Alas! I found it love.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

I THINK we had the chief of all love's joys
Only in knowing that we loved each other.

GEORGE ELIOT

LOVERS

TWO young fair lovers,
Where the warm June wind,
Fresh from the sunny fields,
Plays fondly round them,
Stand, tranced in joy,

With sweet, join'd voices,
And with eyes brimming;
"Ah," they cry, "Destiny,
Prolong the present!
Time, stand still here!"

MATTHEW ARNOLD

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

DO you ask what the birds say? The sparrow,
the dove,
The linnet, and thrush say, "I love, and I love!"
In winter they 're silent, the wind is so strong;
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm
weather,
And singing and loving, all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings and he sings, and forever sings he,
I love my Love, and my Love loves me.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

LOVE NOTES

THE nightingale has a lyre of gold,
The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a box-wood flute,
But I love him best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,
And we in the mad spring weather,
We two have listened till he sang
Our hearts and lips together.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

SONG FROM "PIERO DA CASTIGLIONE"

O JOY of life, O joy of love!
When cloudless skies are blue above,
In starry spring!
When happy warblers on the wing
Do mating build their nests and sing, —
O joy of life!

O joy of life, O joy of love!
When God in cloudless skies above
Knits heart to heart
That time, nor fate, nor death can part.

STUART STEARNE

ON A CLOCK

LONELY once, my love away,
To this slave of Time I cried:
"Faster on your journey glide,
Let your feet no second stay;
Speed the dreary night and day!"
He all heedless, obstinate,
Never quickened in his gait.

Happy once, my love in sight,
To this slave of Time I prayed:
"Be your journey slowly made,
Loiter with me in delight;
Stay the happy day and night!"
Obstinate, he heard at last, —
Heard, and hurried twice as fast.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN

LOVE'S LANGUAGE

THEIR little language the children
Have, on the knee as they sit;
And only those who love them
Can find the key to it.

The words thereof and the grammar
Perplex the logician's art;
But the heart goes straight with the meaning,
And the meaning is clear to the heart.

So thou, my Love, hast a language
That in little says all to me; —
But the world cannot guess the sweetness
Which is hidden with love and thee.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE

THERE is a glory in tree and blossom,
A trill in the wild bird's tone,
A balm in the summer breezes,
That Love revealeth, alone.

BENJAMIN S. PARKER

X.

O Life! what after-joy hast thou
Like Love's first certain gladness?

MARY HOWITT

Nothing is better, I well know,
Than love.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Life may to you bring every good
Which from a Father's hand can fall:
But if true lips have said to me,
"I love you," I have known it all!

PHŒBE CARY

LIFE'S GIFTS

WHEN I grow gray and men shall say to me,
"What was the worth of living, truly told?
Lo! thou hast lived thy life out; thou art old;
Thou hast gathered fruit from many a green-leaved tree,
And kissed love's lips by many a summer sea,
And twined soft hands in locks of shining gold,
But all thy days are dead days now, behold!
Life passes onward, — what is life to thee?"
Then will I answer, — as thy gracious eyes,
Love, gleam upon me from dim far-off skies, —
"Life had its endless deathless charm, — and still
That charm weaves rapture round me at my will,
Life has its glory, — for I have seen *Thee;*
And roses, and June sunsets, — and the sea."

GEORGE BARLOW

EUREKA

WHOM I crown with love is royal,
Matters not her blood or birth;
She is queen, and I am loyal
To the noblest of the earth.

Neither place, nor wealth, nor title,
Lacks the man my friendship owns;
His distinction, true and vital,
Shines supreme o'er crowns and thrones.

Where true love bestows its sweetness,
  Where true friendship lays its hand,
Dwells all greatness, all completeness,
  All the wealth of every land.

Man is greater than condition,
  And where man himself bestows,
He begets, and gives position
  To the gentlest that he knows.

Neither miracle nor fable
  Is the water changed to wine;
Lords and ladies at my table
  Prove Love's simplest fare divine.

And if these accept my duty,
  If the loved my homage own,
I have won all worth and beauty;
  I have found the magic stone.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND

I SIMPLY say that she is good,
  And loves me with pure womanhood.
. . . When that is said, why, what remains?

JOAQUIN MILLER

THE SONG OF THE CAMP

"GIVE us a song!" the soldiers cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
When the heated guns of the camps allied
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan, in silent scoff,
Lay, grim and threatening, under;
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said:
"We storm the forts to-morrow:
Sing while we may, another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon;
Brave hearts from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love and not of fame:
Forgot was Britain's glory;
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang "Annie Laurie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
Until its tender passion
Rose like an anthem, rich and strong, —
Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
But, as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
Rained on the Russian quarters
With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
And bellowing of the mortars.

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
For a singer, dumb and gory,
And English Mary mourns for him
Who sang of "Annie Laurie."

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest
Your truth and valor wearing;
The bravest are the tenderest,
The loving are the daring.

BAYARD TAYLOR

LOVE is the only good in the world,
Henceforth be loved as heart can love,
Or brain devise, or hand approve.

ROBERT BROWNING

GONE

"GONE is the freshness of my youthful prime;
Gone the illusions of a later time;
Gone is the thought that wealth is worth its cost
Or aught I hold so good as what I 've lost;
Gone are the beauty and the nameless grace
That once I worshipped in dear Nature's face.
Gone is the mighty music that of yore
Swept through the woods or rolled upon the shore;
Gone the desire of glory in men's breath
To waft my name beyond the deeps of Death;
Gone is the hope that in the darkest day
Saw bright to-morrow with empurpling ray;
Gone, gone, all gone, on which my heart was cast,
Gone, gone forever to the awful Past: —
All gone — but Love!"
Oh, coward to repine!
Thou hast all else, if Love indeed be thine!

CHARLES MACKAY

BEST

"LOVE is better than house and lands:
So, Sir Stephen, I 'll ride with thee."
She made one step where the courser stands,
One light spring to the saddle-tree.

Love is better than kith or kin:
So close she clung, and so close clasped he,
They heard no sob of the bitter wind,
Or snow that shuddered along the lea.

Love is better than life and breath:
The drifts are over the horse's knee,
Softly they sink to the soft white death,
And the snow shroud hides them silently.

Houses and lands are gone for aye;
Kith and kin like the wild wind flee;
Life and death have vanished away;
But love hath blossomed eternally.

ROSE TERRY COOKE

LOVE'S light is strange to you? Ah, me!
Your heart is an unquickened seed,
And whatsoe'er your fortunes be,
I tell you, you are poor indeed.

What toucheth it, it maketh bright,
Yet loseth nothing, like the sun,
Within whose great and gracious light
A thousand dew-drops shine as one.

ALICE CARY

AN EXTRAVAGANZA

Enfant! si j'étais roi, je donnerais l'empire.

I 'D give, Girl (were I but a king),
Throne, sceptre, empire, — everything:
My people suppliant on the knee;
My ships that crowd the subject sea;
My crown, my baths of porphyry,
For *one* sweet look from thee!

Were I a god, I 'd give — the air,
Earth, and the sea; the angels fair;
The skies; the golden worlds around;
The demons whom my laws have bound;
Chaos and its dark progeny;
All space and all eternity,
For *one* love-kiss from thee!

VICTOR HUGO

THE TWO LOVES

SMOOTHING soft the nestling head
Of a maiden fancy-led,
Thus a grave-eyed woman said:

"Richest gifts are those we make,
Dearer than the love we take
That we give for love's own sake.

"Well I know the heart's unrest;
Mine has been the common quest, —
To be loved and therefore blest.

"Favors undeserved were mine;
At my feet as on a shrine
Love has laid its gifts divine.

"Sweet the offerings seemed, and yet
With their sweetness came regret,
And a sense of unpaid debt.

"Heart of mine unsatisfied,
Was it vanity or pride
That a deeper joy denied?

"Hands that ope but to receive
Empty close; they only live
Richly, who can richly give.

"Still," she sighed with moistening eyes,
"Love is sweet in any guise;
But its best is sacrifice!

"He who, giving, does not crave
Likest is to Him who gave
Life itself the loved to save.

"Love, that self-forgetful gives,
Sows surprise of ripened sheaves,
Late or soon its own receives."

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

BETTER THINGS

BETTER to smell a violet
Than sip the careless wine;
Better to list one music tone
Than watch the jewels' shine.

Better to have the love of one
Than smiles like morning dew;
Better to have a living seed
Than flowers of every hue.

Better to feel a love within
Than be lovely to the sight;
Better a homely tenderness
Than beauty's wild delight.

Better to love than be beloved,
Though lonely all the day;
Better the fountain in the heart
Than the fountain by the way.

Better the thanks of one dear heart
Than a nation's voice of praise;
Better the twilight ere the dawn
Than yesterday's mid-blaze.

Better a death when work is done
Than earth's most favored birth;
Better a child in God's great house
Than the king of all the earth.

LEIGH HUNT

FROM "KATRINA"

I DREW her head
Down to my cheek, and said: "My angel-wife!
Whatever torment or disquietude
I may have suffered, you have never been
Its cause or its occasion. You are all —
You have been all — that womanhood can be
To manhood's want; and in your woman's love
And woman's pain, I have found every good
My life has known since first our lives were joined.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND

WEDDED

HE took in both hands her lovely head,
And looked in her eyes serene,
Many years married, but still as fond
As the foolish boy had been.

And "O my dear," said he, "and my love,
My dear sweet love and my wife,
If every kiss were a golden coin,
You would be rich for life.

"Nay, if of every kiss I have given
Each were but a single penny,
You would be rich with riches to spare —
Sweet wife, think how many, how many!"

"Yea, truly," she said, "yet I 'd not barter one
While I bind up my sheaves of caresses;
But there 's many, oh, many a poor rich wife
Who would give all of her gold for the kisses."

JAMES V. BLAKE

LOVE'S THREAD OF GOLD.

IN the night she told a story,
In the night and all night through,
While the moon was in her glory,
And the branches dropped with dew.
'T was my life she told, and round it
Rose the years as from a deep;
In the world's great heart she found it,
Cradled like a child asleep.
In the night I saw her weaving
By the misty moonbeam cold,
All the weft her shuttle cleaving
With a sacred thread of gold.
Ah! she wept me tears of sorrow,
Lulling tears so mystic sweet;
Then she wove my last to-morrow,
And her web lay at my feet.
Of my life she made the story:
I must weep — so soon 't was told!
But your name did lend it glory,
And your love its thread of gold!

JEAN INGELOW

FROM "LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL"

IN peace love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For Love is heaven, and heaven is Love.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

I.

WHERF the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
Miles and miles
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half asleep
Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop —

II.

Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

III.

Now — the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
Into one)

IV.

Where the doomed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be prest,
Twelve abreast.

V.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone —

VI.

Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

VII.

Now, — the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossoms winks
Through the chinks —

VIII.

Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

IX.

And I know while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and the rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away —

X.

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret, whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb
Till I come.

XI.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts, — and then,
All the men!

XII.

When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

XIII.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and north,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force —
Gold, of course.

XIV.

Oh, heart! oh, blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise, and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest.
Love is best.

ROBERT BROWNING

FROM "THE CHILDREN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER"

LOVE is the root of creation; God's essence; worlds without number
Lie in his bosom like children; he made them for this purpose only.
Only to love and be loved again, he breathed forth his spirit
Into the slumbering dust, and upright standing, it laid its
Hand on its heart, and felt it was warm with a flame out of heaven.
Quench, oh, quench not that flame! It is the breath of your being,
Love is life, but hatred is death.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

EROS

THE sense of the world is short, —
Long and various the report, —
To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it;
And, how oft so'er they 've turned it,
'T will not be improved.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE gate of Heaven is Love, there is none other.

LUCY LARCOM

XI.

He sang out of his soul what he found there.
He sang of Love and Life and Sorrow and Death,
Of Knowledge and of sweet Philosophy;
He sang how Love is mightiest of all these.

HENRY BERNARD CARPENTER

Love is not to be reasoned down or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness.
'T is second life, it grows into the soul,
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse.

JOSEPH ADDISON

I NEVER KNEW IT, LOVE, TILL NOW

I ne'er imagined, Love, that thou
  Wert such a mighty one; at will,
Thou canst both faith and conscience bow,
  And thy despotic law fulfil;
I never knew it, Love, till now.

I thought I knew thee well, — I thought
  That I thy mazes had explored;
But I within thy nets am caught,
  And now I own thee sovereign lord.
I ne'er imagined, Love, that thou
  Wert such a mighty one; at will,
Thou bid'st both faith and conscience bow,
  And thy despotic law fulfil;
I never knew it, Love, till now.

Spanish of Juan II., King of Castile

LOVE SCORNS DEGREES

LOVE scorns degrees! the low he lifteth high,
  The high he draweth down to that fair plain
Whereon, in his divine equality,
Two loving hearts may meet, nor meet in vain;
'Gainst such sweet levelling Custom cries amain,
But o'er its harshest utterance one bland sigh,
Breathed passion-wise, doth mount victorious still,
For Love, earth's lord must have his lordly will.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

THE LAST LETTER

LONG years within its sepulchre
Of faintly scented cedar,
Has lain this letter, dear to her
Who was its constant reader;
The postmark on the envelope
Sufficed the date to give her,
And told the birth of patient hope
That managed to outlive her.

How often to this treasure-box,
Tears in her eyes' soft fringes,
She came with key and turned the locks,
And on its brazen hinges
Swung back the quaintly figured lid,
And raised a sandal cover,
Disclosing, under trinkets hid,
This message from her lover.

Then lifting it as 't were a child,
Her hand awhile caressed it
Ere to the lips that sadly smiled
Time and again she pressed it;
Then drew the small enclosure out
And smoothed the wrinkled paper,
Lest any line should leave a doubt
Or any word escape her.

Still held the olden charm its place
Amid the tender phrases.
Time seemed unwilling to efface
The love-pervaded praises;

And though a thousand lovers might
Have matched them all for passion,
A poet were inspired to write
In their unstudied fashion.

From "Darling" slowly, word by word,
She reads the tear-stained treasure;
The mists by which her eyes were blurred
Grew out of pain and pleasure;
But when she reached that cherished name,
And saw the last leave-taking,
The mist a storm of grief became —
Her very heart was breaking!

I put it back, — this old-time note
Which seems like sorrow's leaven,
For she who read and he who wrote,
Please God, are now in heaven.
If lovers of to-day could win
Such love as won this letter,
The world about us would begin
To gladden and grow better.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN

FOR they alone have need of sorrow,
And they alone are poor,
For whom, in life, Love's holy angel
Hath opened not her door.

MARY CLEMMER

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

GO, time and tide, go as you will —
I cannot heed your ways.
What care I for summer glow,
What care I for ice and snow,
When love doth fill my days?

Into its ark through wind and rain
My heart flies as the dove;
Oh, rosy is the darkened day
And rosy is the stormy way
That lead me to my Love.

How can I care if leaves be green
Or gray with early rime?
Love, ruling, reigning in the soul
With pure and passionate control,
Makes its own summer-time.

ELLEN MACKAY HUTCHINSON

LOVE AND LIFE

THE way is steep and hard to tread, and drear;
Piercing and bleak the icy atmosphere,
My feet are bruised and bleeding, and my eyes
Can only with dim questionings seek the skies.
How could I walk a step without thine aid?
How face the awful silence unafraid?
How bear the star-rays and the moon glance cold?
Loose not thine hold!

Earth and its kindly ways seem very far,
And yet the shining skies no nearer are;
Except for thee, dear Love, I could not go
Over the hard rocks, the untrodden snow,
But had sat down content with lower things,
With scanty crumbs and waning water-springs, —
A wingèd thing, whose wings might not unfold.
Loose not thine hold!

Loose not thine hold! let me feel all the while
The quickening impulse of thy tender smile
Luring me on, and catch, as if in trance,
The lovely reverence of thy downward glance,
The pity and the splendor of thy face,
The recognition like a soft embrace,
Until my feet shall tread the streets of gold.
Loose not thy hold!

SARAH WOOLSEY
(SUSAN COOLIDGE)

THE HEART'S CALL

HE rides away at early light,
Amid the tingling frost,
And in the mist that sweeps her sight
His form is quickly lost.

He crosses now the silent stream,
Now skirts the forest drear,
Whose thickets cast a silver gleam
From leafage thin and sear.

Long falls the shadow at his back
(The morning springs before);
His thoughts fly down the shadow'd track
And haunt his cottage door.

Miles gone, upon the hilltop bare
He draws a sudden rein;
His name, her voice, rings on the air,
Then all is still again!

She sits at home, she speaks no word,
But deeply calls her heart;
And this it is that he has heard,
Though they are miles apart.

EDITH M. THOMAS

MY JEAN

THOUGH cruel fate should bid us part,
Far as the pole and line,
Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.
Though mountains rise, and deserts howl,
And oceans roar between,
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.

ROBERT BURNS

FROM "HAROLD"

HAROLD.

CALL me not King, but Harold.

EDITH.

Nay, thou art King!

HAROLD.

Thine, thine, or King or churl!
My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn not thou
Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and command
That kiss my due when subject, which will make
My kingship kinglier to me than to reign
King of the world without it.

. . . . . .

Kiss me — thou art not
A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in my kiss,
And more than sister in thine own.

EDITH.

I dare not.

. . . . . .

HAROLD.

Edith,
Hadst thou been braver, I had better braved
All — but I love thee and thou me — and that
Remains beyond all chances and all churches,
And that thou knowest.

EDITH.

Ay, but take back thy ring.
It burns my hand — a curse to thee and me.
I dare not wear it.

HAROLD.

But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exit.*

EDITH.

The King hath cursed him, if he marry me;
The Pope hath cursed him, marry me or no!
God help me! I know nothing — can but pray
For Harold — pray, pray, pray — no help but prayer,
A breath that fleets beyond this iron world,
And touches Him that made it.

ALFRED TENNYSON

AH, Love! let us be true
To one another; for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

FROM "EVANGELINE"

HALF-WAY down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction, —
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered, —
"Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

LOVE'S FINAL POWERS

THERE are strong powers of love that early years
Know little of. — All added force of being
Gives love new, deeper, tenderer eyes for seeing,
And love wins sweetness from a lifetime's tears.
All pangs and hopes and joys and trembling fears
Add strength to love. As life's black darkness grows,
Love's firmer step through that murk darkness goes,
And dauntless over the grave's brink Love peers.

There are strange powers of love that youthful days
Know little of. — There is a love beside
Whose strength the passion of the ocean wide
Is like the ripples whispering in blue bays:
A love beside whose strength death's fingers wild
Are weak as pink soft fingers of a child.

GEORGE BARLOW

FROM "ARTEVELDE"

ADRIANA.

NAY, said I not —
And if I said it not, I say it now:
I 'll follow thee through sunshine and through storm,
I will be with thee in thy weal and woe,
In thy afflictions, should they fall upon thee;
In thy temptations, when bad men beset thee,
And should they crush thee, in the hour of death,
Let but thy love be with me to the last.

ARTEVELDE.

My love is with thee ever; that thou knowest.

HENRY TAYLOR

I CANNOT tell the spell that binds thine image
Forever in my heart;
I only know thou art to my existence
Its very, vital part.

ANNIE CHAMBERS-KETCHUM

XII.

Too full of love my soul is to find place
For fear or anger.

EDWIN ARNOLD

I do not love thee less for what is done
And cannot be undone. Thy very weakness
Hath brought thee nearer to me, and henceforth
My love will have a sense of pity in it
Making it less a worship than before.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

TWO TRUTHS

"DARLING," he said, "I never meant
To hurt you;" and his eyes were wet.
"I would not hurt you for the world;
Am I to blame if I forget?"

"Forgive my selfish tears!" she cried,
"Forgive! I knew that it was not
Because you meant to hurt me, sweet, —
I knew it was that you forgot!"

But all the same, deep in her heart
Rankled this thought, and rankles yet, —
"When love is at its best, one loves
So much that he cannot forget."

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

AT NOON AND MIDNIGHT

FAR in the night, yet no rest for him! The pillow next his own
The wife's sweet face in slumber pressed — yet he awake, alone! alone!
In vain he courted sleep; one thought would ever in his heart arise, —
The harsh words that at noon had brought the tear-drops to her eyes.

Slowly on lifted arm he raised and listened. All was still as death.
He touched her forehead as he gazed, and listened yet, with bated breath,
Still silently as though he prayed, his lips moved lightly as she slept —
For God was with him, and he laid his face with hers and wept.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

OUR OWN

IF I had known in the morning,
How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But — we vex our own with look and tone
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease!
How many go forth in the morning
Who never come home at night,
And hearts have been broken for harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest,
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.
Ah, lip with the curve impatient,
Ah, brow with the shade of scorn,
'T were cruel fate were the night too late
To undo the work of morn.

MARGARET ELIZABETH SANGSTER

A LETTER

TWO things love can do,
Only two;
Can distrust or can believe;
It can die or it can live.
There is no syncope
Possible to love or me.
Go your ways!

Two things you can do,
Only two;
Be the thing you used to be,
Or be nothing more to me,
I can but joy or grieve,
Can no more than die or live.
Go your ways!

So far I wrote, my darling, drearily,
But now my sad pen falls down wearily
From out my trembling hand.

I did not, do not, cannot mean it, Dear!
Come life or death, joy, grief, or hope or fear,
I bless you where I stand!

I bless you where I stand excusing you,
No speech nor language for accusing you
My laggard lips can learn.

To you — be what you are, or can, to me —
To you or blessedly or fatefully
My heart must turn!

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

WE KISS'D AGAIN WITH TEARS

AS thro' the land at eve we went
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
Oh, we fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
Oh, there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

ALFRED TENNYSON

FORGIVEN

I DREAMED so dear a dream of you last night!
I thought you came. I was so glad, so gay,
I whispered, "Those were foolish words to say;
I meant them not. I cannot bear the sight
Of your dear face. I cannot meet the light
Of your dear eyes upon me. Sit, I pray, —
Sit here beside me; turn your look away,
And lay your cheek on mine." Till morning bright
We sat so, and we did not speak. I knew
All was forgiven; so I nestled there
With your arms round. Swift the sweet hours flew.
At last I waked, and sought you everywhere.
How long, dear, think you, that my glad cheek will
Burn, — as it burns with your cheek's pressure still?

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

IT is n't the thing you do, dear,
It 's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of a heart-ache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.

MARGARET ELIZABETH SANGSTER

HER fittest triumph is to show that good
Lurks in the heart of evil evermore;
That love, though scorned and outcast and withstood,
Can without end forgive, and yet have store.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

XIII.

Not to be with you, not to see your face,
Alas for me then, my good days are done.

ALFRED TENNYSON

O friend! O best of friends! Thy absence more
Than the impending night darkens the landscape o'er!

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

GONE

IS it the shrewd October wind
  Brings the tears into her eyes?
Does it blow so strong that she must fetch
  Her breath in sudden sighs?

The sound of his horse's feet grows faint,
  The Rider has passed from sight;
The day glides out of the crimson west,
  And coldly falls the night.

She presses her tremulous fingers tight
  Against her closèd eyes,
And on the lonesome threshold there,
  She cowers down and cries.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

FROM "MICHAEL ANGELO"

NOW that she is gone,
Rome is no longer Rome till she return.
This feeling overmasters me. I know not
If it be love, this strong desire to be
Forever in her presence; but I know
That I who was the friend of solitude,
And ever was best pleased when most alone,
Now weary grow of my own company.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

ABSENCE

WHAT shall I do with all the days and hours
That must be counted ere I see thy face?
How shall I charm the interval that lowers
Between this time, and that sweet time of grace?

Shall I in slumber steep each weary sense,
Weary with longing? Shall I flee away
Into past days, and with some fond pretence
Cheat myself to forget the present day?

Shall love for thee lay on my soul the sin
Of casting from me God's great gift of time?
Shall I, these mists of memory locked within,
Leave and forget life's purposes sublime?

Oh, how, or by what means, may I contrive
To bring the hour that brings thee back more near?
How may I teach my drooping hope to live
Until that blessed time, and thou art here?

I 'll tell thee, for thy sake I will lay hold
Of all good aims, and consecrate to thee
In worthy deeds each moment that is told,
While thou, beloved one! art far from me.

For thee I will arouse my thoughts to try
All heavenward flights, all high and holy strains.
For thy dear sake I will walk patiently
Through these long hours, nor call their minutes pains.

I will this dreary blank of absence make
A noble task-time, and will therein strive
To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
More good than I have won, since yet I live.

So may this doomèd time build up in me
A thousand graces which shall thus be thine;
So may my love and longing hallowed be,
And thy dear thought an influence divine.

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE

THE BOAT OF MY LOVER

O BOAT of my lover! go softly, go safely,
O boat of my lover that bears him from me,
From the homes of the clachan, from the burn singing sweetly,
From the loch and the mountain he 'll never more see.

O boat of my lover! go softly, go safely,
Thou bearest my soul with thee over the tide.
I said not a word, but my heart it was breaking;
For life is so short and the ocean so wide!

O boat of my lover! go softly, go safely,
Though the dear voice is silent, the kind hand is gone;
But oh, love me, my lover, and I 'll live till I find thee,
Till our parting is over, and our dark days are done.

DINAH MARIA MULOCH-CRAIK

THE LOVED ONE EVER NEAR

I THINK of thee, when the bright sunlight shimmers
Across the sea;
When the clear fountain in the moonbeam glimmers
I think of thee.

I see thee, if far up the pathway yonder
The dust be stirred;
If faint steps o'er the little bridge to wander
At night be heard.

I hear thee when the tossing wave's low rumbling
Creeps up the hill;
I go to the lone wood and listen, trembling,
When all is still.

I am with thee wherever thou art roaming, —
And thou art near!
The sun goes down, and soon the stars are coming;
Would thou wert here!

J. S. DWIGHT
From the German of Goethe

BUT oh! 'twas hard to have him go, — to know
Day after day must pass without one sight
Of him who was so dear, *so dear!* to pine,
And sigh, and long for one hand-clasp; one sound
Of that soft, pleasant voice, to me so sweet;
One glance of those dear eyes I loved to meet.

CELIA E. GARDINER

AMONG THE HEATHER

WINTRY winds are blowing cold
On the moors of purple heather,
Where in summer days of old
Hand in hand we idly strolled,
Thou and I together.
But those sunny days are past,
And no more we walk together
Where the snow, on every blast,
Whirls above the heather.

On the dreary moorland now
In the storm I wander, lonely,
Longing — love alone knows how —
For thy kiss on lips and brow,
Longing for thee only:
Life can bring me naught but pain
Till among the purple heather
Hand in hand we walk again, —
Thou and I together!

GEORGE ARNOLD

THEY PARTED

THEY parted — if it be to part
Still to live in each other's heart,
Forever one dear face behold,
Forever one dear form enfold,
One voice forever seem to hear.

JAMES ROBINSON PLANCHE

GOOD-BY, SWEETHEART

GOOD-BY, Sweetheart.
I leave thee with all loveliest things
The beauty-burdened springtime brings, —
The anemone in snowy hood,
The sweet arbutus in the wood.
And to the smiling skies above
I say, "Bend lightly o'er my love."
And to the perfume-breathing breeze
I sigh, "Sing softest symphonies."
O lute-like leaves of laden trees,
Bear all your sweet refrain to him,
While in the June-time twilights dim
He thinks of me as I of him.
And so Good-by, Sweetheart!

Good-by, Sweetheart.
I leave thee with all purest things,
That when some fair temptation sings
Its luring song, though sore beset,
Thou 'lt stronger be; then no regret
Life-long will follow after thee.
With touches lighter than the air
I kiss thy forehead brave and fair,
And say to God this last deep prayer,
"Oh, guard him always night and day,
So from Thy peace he shall not stray."
And so Good-by, Sweetheart.

Good-by, Sweetheart. We seem to part;
Yet still within my inmost heart
Thou goest with me. Still my place
I hold in thine by love's dear grace;
Yet all my life seems going out,
As slow I turn my face about
To go alone another way, —
To be alone till life's last day,
Unless thy smile can light my way.
Good-by, Sweetheart. The dreaded dawn
That tells our love's long tryst is gone
Is purpling all the pallid sky
As loud I sigh, Sweetheart, good-by!

MARY CLEMMER

O DAYS AND HOURS

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace
For fuller gain of after bliss;

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet,
And unto meeting when we meet
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of toothèd wheels
And all the courses of the suns.

ALFRED TENNYSON

PARTING WORDS

GOOD-BY, O love, once more I hold your hand;
Good-by, for now the wind blows loud and long,
The ship is ready, and the waves are strong
To bear me far away from this thy strand.
I know the sea that I shall cross, and land
Whereto I journey, and the forms that throng
Its palaces and shrines; I know the song
That they alone can sing and understand.
But promise me, O love, before I go
That sometimes, when the sun and wind are low,
You, walking in the old familiar ways,
Thronged with gray phantoms of the buried days,
Will, looking seaward, say, I wonder now
How fares it with him in the distant place.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON

WORDS FOR PARTING

OH, what shall I do, dear,
In the coming years, I wonder,
When our paths which lie so sweetly near,
Shall lie so far asunder?
Oh, what shall I do, dear,
Through all the sad to-morrows,
When the sunny smile has ceased to cheer
That smiles away my sorrows?

What shall I do, my friend,
When you are gone forever?
My heart its eager need will send
Through the years, to find you never.
And how will it be with you,
In the weary world, I wonder!
Will you love me with a love as true,
When our paths lie far asunder?

A sweeter, sadder thing,
My life for having known you:
Forever with my sacred kin,
My soul's soul I must own you,—
Forever mine, my friend,
From June to life's December,
Not mine to have or hold,
But to pray for and remember.

The way is short, O friend,
That reaches out before us.
God's tender heavens above us bend,
His love is smiling o'er us.
A little while is ours,
For sorrow or for laughter:
I 'll lay the hand you love in yours,
On the shore of the hereafter.

MARY CLEMMER

XIV.

Thither where he lies buried!
That single spot is the whole earth to me.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Peace, wild-wrung hands! hush, sobbing breath!
Love keepeth its own through life and death.

DINAH MARIA MULOCH-CRAIK

THE WEDDING VEIL

DEAR Anna, when I brought her veil,
Her white veil on her wedding night,
Threw o'er my thin brown hair its folds,
And laughing, turned me to the light.

"See, Bessie, see! you wear at last
The bridal veil foresworn for years!"
She saw my face,— her laugh was hushed,
Her happy eyes were filled with tears.

With kindly haste and trembling hand
She drew away the gauzy mist;
"Forgive, dear heart!" her sweet voice said:
Her loving lips my forehead kissed.

We passed from out the searching light,
The summer night was calm and fair:
I did not see her pitying eyes,
I felt her soft hand smooth my hair.

Her tender love unlocked my heart:
'Mid falling tears at last I said,
"Foresworn, indeed, to me that veil
Because I only love the dead!"

She stood one moment statue-still,
And musing spake in undertone,
"The living love may colder grow;
The dead is safe with God alone."

ELIZABETH WHITTIER

SCOTCH HEATHER

JUST a sprig of Scottish heather, in a letter where the tears,
Which have blotted words together, have been dried these many years.
Loving lines, yet sadly cheerful, — how "'t was lonesome here to-day,"
Then a pause, a little tearful, "Dear, you are so far away!"

Every sentence has its token of a love that could not fail
Throbbing with a faith unspoken, though the ink is growing pale;
Faded are the lines dim-lettered like sad ghosts upon the page;
Ah, that poor love should be fettered with the rusty iron of age!

Then that line, "I picked the heather from that spot, dear, you will know,
Where we walked and talked together — oh, it seems so long ago!"
And at last, "Love, how much better it will be when, by and by,
We 'll not need to write a letter to each other, you and I!"

God! with what another meaning that one line has long been true,
With Death's silence intervening since I last have heard from you,

When you dropped Life's weary fetters, when you
went so far away, —
Thought you of unwritten letters I was missing from
that day?

If you know how I have needed some new token
through the years
You have slept away unheeded, it must move your soul
to tears.
If you still know how I love you, how I 've missed you
day by day,
Since the heather grew above you, you could never
stay away.

Take all treasures, Time, I cherish, Fame and Hope
and Life at last,
Flitting things which needs must perish, — spare this
memory of the Past
Lying with a sprig of heather, in a letter, where the
tears
Which have blotted words together, have been dried
these many years.

MARION MANVILLE

THE TWO LOCKS OF HAIR

A YOUTH, light-hearted and content,
I wander through the world;
Here, Arab-like, is pitched my tent
And straight again is furled.

Yet oft I dream, that once a wife
  Close in my heart was locked,
And in the sweet repose of life
  A blessed child I rocked.

I wake! Away that dream — away!
  Too long did it remain!
So long, that both by night and day
  It ever comes again.

The end lies ever in my thought:
  To a grave so cold and deep
The mother beautiful was brought;
  Then dropt the child asleep.

But now the dream is wholly o'er,
  I bathe mine eyes and see;
And wander through the world once more,
  A youth so light and free.

Two locks — and they are wondrous fair —
  Left me that vision mild;
The brown is from the mother's hair,
  The blond is from the child.

And when I see that lock of gold,
  Pale grows the evening red;
And when the dark lock I behold,
  I wish that I were dead.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
From the German of Pfizer

A SHADOW

WHAT lack the valleys and the mountains
That once were green and gay?
What lack the babbling fountains?
Their voice is sad to-day.
Only the sound of a voice,
Tender and sweet and low,
That made the earth rejoice
A year ago!

What lack the tender flowers?
A shadow is on the sun.
What lack the merry hours,
That I long that they were done?
Only two smiling eyes,
That told of joy and mirth;
They are shining in the skies;
I mourn on earth!

What lacks my heart that makes it
So weary and full of pain,
That trembling Hope forsakes it,
Never to come again?
Only another heart,
Tender and all mine own;
In the still grave it lies;
I weep alone.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

RONDEL

OUT of the past remembered eyes
Pursue and hold me fast;
Their dark pure splendor never dies
Out of the past.
Save the young light that in them lies,
Time all things fair doth blast,
And still unresting onward flies;
But darkly though life's evening skies
Their gathering shadows cast,
Love-light for me shall ever rise
Out of the past.

MAXWELL GRAY

XV.

Think not in death my love could ever cease;
If thou wast false, more need there is for me
Still to be true.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

There is hope that is never put by,
There is love that refuses to die.

LUCY LARCOM

THE UNWISE CHOICE

TWO young men, when I was poor,
Came and stood at my open door;

One said to me, "I have gold to give;"
And one, "I will love you while I live!"

My sight was dazzled, woe 's the day!
And I sent the poor young man away, —

Sent him away, I know not where,
And my heart went with him, unaware.

He did not give me any sighs,
But he left his picture in my eyes;

And in my eyes it has always been:
I have no heart to keep it in!

Beside the lane with hedges sweet,
Where we parted, nevermore to meet,

He pulled a flower of love's own hue,
And where it had been came out two!

And in th' grass where he stood, for years,
The dews of th' morning looked like tears.

Still smiles the house where I was born
Among its fields of wheat and corn,

Wheat and corn that strangers bind —
I reap as I sowed, and I sowed to th' wind.

As one who feels the truth break through
His dream, and knows his dream untrue,

I live where splendors shine, and sigh
For a peace that splendor cannot buy, —

Sigh for the day I was rich tho' poor,
And saw th' two young men at my door!

ALICE CARY

A WOMAN'S DEATH-WOUND

IT left upon her tender flesh no trace.
The murderer is safe. As swift as light
The weapon fell, and, in the summer night,
Did scarce the silent, dewy air displace;
'T was but a word. A blow had been less base.
Like dumb beast branded by an iron white
With heat, she turned in blind and helpless flight;
But then remembered, and with piteous face
Came back.
Since then the world has nothing missed
In her, in voice or smile. But she — each day
She counts until her dying be complete.
One moan she makes, and ever doth repeat:
"O lips that I have loved and kissed and kissed,
Did I deserve to die this bitterest way?"

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I AM a woman — therefore I may not
Call to him, cry to him,
Fly to him,
Bid him delay not!

And when he comes to me, I must sit quiet,
Still as a stone,
All silent and cold.
If my heart riot,
Crush and defy it!
Should I grow bold —
Say one dear thing to him,
All my life fling to him,
Cling to him —
What to atone
Is enough for my sinning!
This were the cost to me,
This were my winning, —
That he were lost to me.

Not as a lover
At last if he part from me,
Tearing my heart from me,
Hurt beyond cure, —
Calm and demure
Then must I hold me,
In myself fold me,
Lest he discover;

Showing no sign to him,
By look of mine to him,
What he has been to me, —
How my heart turns to him,
Follows him, yearns to him,
Prays him to love me, —
Pity me, lean to me,
Thou God above me!

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

BURNT SHIPS

O LOVE, sweet Love, who came with rosy sail
And foaming prow across the misty sea!
O Love, brave Love, whose faith was full and free
That lands of sun and gold, which could not fail,
Lay in the west, that bloom no wintry gale
Could blight, and eyes whose love thine own should be,
Called thee, with steadfast voice of prophecy,
To shores unknown!
O Love, poor Love, avail
Thee nothing now thy faiths, thy braveries;
There is no sun, no bloom; a cold wind strips
The bitter foam from off the wave where dips
No more thy prow; the eyes are hostile eyes;
The gold is hidden; vain thy tears and cries.
O Love, poor Love, why didst thou burn thy ships?

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

PRESAGE

IF, some day, I should seek those eyes
So gentle now, and find the strange,
Pale shadow of a coming change,
To chill me with sad surprise:

Shouldst thou recall what thou hast given,
And turn me slowly cold and dumb,
And thou thyself again become
Remote as any star in heaven, —

Would the sky ever seem again
Perfectly clear? Would the serene,
Sweet face of Nature steal between
This grief and me, to dull its pain?

Oh, not for many a weary day
Would sorrow soften to regret;
And many a sun would rise and set
Ere I, with cheerful heart, could say:

"All undeserved it came. To-day
God takes it back again, because
Too beautiful a thing it was
For such as I to keep for aye."

And ever, through the coming years,
My star remote in happy skies
Would seem more heavenly fair through eyes
Yet tremulous with unfallen tears.

CELIA THAXTER

XVI.

Perhaps it will all come right at last:
It may be, when all is done,
We shall be together in some good world
Where to wish and to have are one.

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

A LIFE LESSON

THERE, little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your doll, I know;
And your tea-set blue,
And your play-house, too,
Are things of the long ago;
But childish troubles will soon pass by —
There, little girl, don't cry!

There, little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your school-girl days
Are things of the long ago;
But life and love will soon come by —
There, little girl, don't cry!

There, little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams
Are things of the long ago;
But heaven holds all for which you sigh —
There, little girl, don't cry!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

I CANNOT THINK BUT GOD MUST KNOW

I CANNOT think but God must know
About the thing I long for so;
I know He is so good, so kind,
I cannot think but He will find
Some way to help, some way to show
Me to the thing I long for so.

I stretch my hand — it lies so near;
It looks so sweet; it looks so dear.
"Dear Lord," I pray, "oh, let me know
If it is wrong to want it so!"
He only smiles — He does not speak;
My heart grows weaker and more weak
With looking at the thing so dear,
Which lies so far and yet so near.

Now, Lord, I leave at Thy loved feet
This thing which looks so near, so sweet;
I will not seek, I will not long, —
I almost fear I have been wrong.
I 'll go and work the harder, Lord,
And wait till by some loud, clear word
Thou callest me to Thy loved feet
To take this thing so dear, so sweet.

SAXE HOLM

DIVIDED

AND yet I know past all doubting, truly —
And knowledge greater than grief can dim —
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly —
Yea, better — e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, "Thy breadth and thy depth forever
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me."

JEAN INGELOW

I HEAR A DEAR, FAMILIAR TONE

I HEAR a dear, familiar tone,
A loving hand is in my own,
And earth seems made for me alone.

If I my fortunes could have planned,
I would not have let go that hand;
But they must fall who learn to stand.

And how to blend life's varied hues,
What ill to find, what good to lose,
My Father knoweth best to choose.

ALICE CARY

FROM "EVANGELINE"

SOMETIMES she spake with those who had seen her belovèd and known him,
But it was long ago in some far-off place or forgotten.

. . . . . .

Then would they say, "Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?
Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?
Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy.
Thou art too fair to be left to braid Saint Catherine's tresses."
Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, "I cannot!
Whither my heart has gone there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
Thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,
Said, with a smile, "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!
Talk not of wasted affection, — affection never was wasted;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;
That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.
Patience! accomplish thy labor, accomplish thy work of affection!
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike,
Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike.
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven!"
Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered, "Despair not!"

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WHICH IS BEST?

WHAT if I saved from trampling feet
The drooping plumes of a wounded bird,
And tended its hurt with a gentle hand
Till its life new stirred?

What if it nestled against my cheek,
And tamed its shyness upon my breast,
Until I believed that it loved me more
Than its old-time nest?

And if some day, when I prized it most,
It should leave my hand with a sudden spring,
And cleave the blue of a summer sky
With a freshened wing,

And never pause at my pleading call, —
Never come back to my desolate breast, —
And forget I had saved its life, and forget
I had loved it best,

Should I never open my arms again
To any helpless or suffering thing?
Never bind up the bruisèd heart
Nor the broken wing?

Better a thousand times, to bear
A blow in the place of an earned caress,
Than to turn aside into selfish ways,
Or to pity less.

Better the long abiding pain
Of a wrongèd love, in its sufferance meek,
Than the hardened heart and the bitter tongue
And the sullen cheek.

LAURA C. REDDEN

THORNLESS ROSES

"NO rose may bloom without a thorn?"
Come down the garden path and see
How brightly in the scented air
They bloom for you and me!

See how like rosy clouds, they lie
Against the perfect, stainless blue!
See how they toss their airy heads,
And smile for me, for you!

No scanty largess, meanly doled, —
No pallid blooms, by two, by three,
But a whole crowd of pink-white wings
Fluttering for you and me.

So fair they are I cannot choose;
I pluck the rich spoils here and there;
I heap them on your waiting arms;
I twine them in your hair.

There is no thorn among them all, —
No sharp sting in the heart of bliss, —
No bitter in the honeyed cup, —
No burning in the kiss.

Nay, quote the proverb if you must,
And mock the truth you will not see;
Nathless, Love's thornless roses blow
Somewhere for you and me.

JULIA C. R. DORR

I HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE GAY

"I HAVE the courage to be gay,
Although she lieth lapped away
Under the daisies, for I say,
'Thou wouldst be glad if thou couldst see:'
My constant thought makes manifest
I have not what I love the best,
But I must thank God for the rest
While I hold heaven a verity."

JEAN INGELOW

WHAT SEQUEL?

OF Love that never found its earthly end,
What sequel? streaming eyes and broken hearts?
And all the same as if it had not been?

ALFRED TENNYSON

NAUGHT is the same "as if Love had not been!"
Where it hath shone it is like sunlight poured
On seeds which slept, surprising naked soil
Into new verdure, and an unhoped spring.

EDWIN ARNOLD

XVII.

Love is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome Love with a smile and a song.
Love can stay but a little while,
Why cannot he stay? They call him away;
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;
Love will stay for a whole life long.

ALFRED TENNYSON

IN TWOS

SOMEWHERE in the world there hide
Garden-gates that no one sees.
Save they come in happy twos, —
Not in ones, nor yet in threes.

But from every maiden's door
Leads a pathway straight and true;
Map and survey find it not, —
He who finds, finds room for two.

Then they see the garden-gates!
Never skies so blue as theirs,
Never flowers so many, sweet,
As for those who come in pairs.

Round and round the alleys wind;
Now a cradle bars the way,
Now a little mound, behind, —
So the two go through the day.

When no nook in all the lanes
But has heard a song or sigh,
Lo! another garden-gate
Opens as the two go by.

In they wander, knowing not;
"Five and Twenty" fills the air
With a silvery echo low,
All about the startled pair.

Happier yet these garden walks;
Closer, heart to heart, they lean;
Stiller, softer, falls the light;
Few the twos, and far between,

Till at last as on they pass
Down the paths so well they know,
Once again at hidden gates
Stand the two; they enter slow.

Golden gates of Fifty Years,
May our two your latchet press!
Garden of the Sunset Land,
Hold their dearest happiness!

Then a quiet walk again;
Then a wicket in the wall;
Then one stepping on alone, —
Then two at the Heart of All!

W. C. GANNETT

SHE was sent forth
To bring that light which never wintry blast
Blows out, nor rain, nor snow, extinguishes, —
The light which shines with loving eyes upon
Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.

LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON

SONG

LOVE is not a feeling to pass away,
Like the balmy breath of a summer-day;
It is not — it cannot be — laid aside;
It is not a thing to forget or hide.
It clings to the heart, ah, woe is me!
As the ivy clings to the old oak tree.

Love is not a passion of earthly mould,
As a thirst for honor, or fame, or gold;
For when all these wishes have died away,
The deep strong love of a brighter day,
Though nourished in secret, consumes the more,
As the slow rust eats to the iron's core.

CHARLES DICKENS

TOGETHER

THEY were young and glad together
In the dawn of life's first May,
When in bright and sunny weather
Sang the birds from every spray.
Clear the heaven shone out above them;
Blue and radiant were the skies;
All things living seemed to love them;
And the spring gleamed in her eyes.

Through life's summer still together,
Hand in hand and heart to heart,
They have borne the sultry weather
And have watched the days depart.
Still she is to him the maiden
Who stepped daintily of old
Through the grass, her apron laden
With bright buttercups of gold.

Still together, still together,
They will face life's autumn hours;
In the grim November weather
Love will strew their path with flowers.
For their love has ever brightened
Since the first long loving day,
And their happiness has heightened,
Though their hair is growing gray!

GEORGE BARLOW

FROM "ENOCH ARDEN"

WOMAN, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die,
Sit down again; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge you now
When you shall see her tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her
Save for the bar between us, loving her
As when she laid her head beside my own.

ALFRED TENNYSON

TWO EPOCHS

LOVERS by a dim sea strand
Looking wave-ward, hand in hand;
Silent, tremble with the bliss
Of their first betrothal kiss.

Lovers still, tho' wedded long!
Time true love can never wrong!
Gazing, faithful, hand in hand,
O'er a darker sea and strand:

Ah! one lover's face is wan
As a wave the moon shines on;
But those strange tides stretched afar
Know not sun, nor moon, nor star.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

XVIII.

O winds! ye are too rough, too rough!
O spring! thou art not long enough
For sweetness; and for thee,
O love! thou still must overpass
Time's low and dark and narrow glass,
And fill eternity.

ALICE CARY

LOVE AND DEATH

WHAT time the mighty moon was gathering light
Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes;
When, turning round a cassia, full in view
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his sight.
"You must begone," said Death, "these walks are mine."
Love wept, and spread his sheeny vans for flight;
Yet ere he parted said, "This hour is thine;
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the tree
Stands in the sun and shadows all beneath,
So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of death;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall fall,
But I shall reign forever over all."

ALFRED TENNYSON

AFTER-SONG

THROUGH love to light! Oh, wonderful the way
That leads from darkness to the perfect day!
From darkness and from sorrow of the night
To morning that comes singing o'er the sea,
Through love to light! Through light, O God, to Thee,
Who art the love of love, the eternal light of light!

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

FROM "THE SINGER"

O SILENT land to which we move,
Enough if there alone be love;
And mortal need can ne'er outgrow
What it is waiting to bestow!

O white soul! from that far-off shore
Float some sweet song the waters o'er;
Our faith confirm, our fears dispel,
With the old voice we loved so well!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

FROM "SNOW-BOUND"

YET love will dream and faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just),
That somehow, somewhere meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death
And Love can never lose its own!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

THREE MEETINGS

O THE happy meeting from over the sea,
When I love my friend and my friend loves me;
And we stand face to face, and for letters read
There are endless words to be heard and said:
With a glance between whiles, shy, anxious, half strange,
As if asking, "Say now is there any change?"
Till we settle down just as we used to be,
For I love my friend and my friend loves me.

O the blessed meeting of lovers true
Against whom Fate has done all that Fate could do
And then dropped vanquished; while over those slain
Dead weeks, months, years, of parting and pain,
Hope lifts her banner, gay, gallant, and fair,
Untainted, untorn in the balmy air;
And the heaven of the future, golden and bright,
Arches above them — God guards the right.

But O for the meeting to come one day,
When the spirit slips out of its house of clay;
When the standers-by with a gentle sign
Shall kindly cover this face of mine,
And I leap —whither? — ah, who can know?
But outward, onward, as spirits must go,
Till eye to eye without fear I see
God — and my lost — as they see me.

DINAH MARIA MULOCH-CRAIK

LOVE IS ETERNAL

LOVE is eternal, so the strong souls say,
But seeing how hard life doth give the lie
Unto the mighty words, with sneer or sigh,
The weaker ones cry out in sad dismay
That love is changeful as an April day,
Holding within itself no strength whereby
It can the subtle shafts of time defy,
And in the heart of man abide alway.

Not every heart is great enough to hold
A great immortal tenant. Love hath fled
Always from natures narrow, weak, and cold.
Know, when by scornful lips you hear it said
That Love is traitor, that the truth is told
Not of dear Love, but of that soul instead.

CARLOTTA PERRY

THERE will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me, —
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, — only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

A FAREWELL

THE west-wind, laden with fragrance, blows,
The dewdrops shine in the crimson rose;
— Is there something yet to tell?
Ay, winds must pass and dewdrops fall;
Naught that is gone can we recall:
So now, dear Love, farewell!

Sweet lips prattle, and laugh and sing,
White arms tenderly, closely cling;
— Is there something sad to tell?
Ay, the sweet lips shall silent be,
And the arms unclasp in their agony:
So now, dear Love, farewell!

Then is there nothing that God has made
That will not one day fall or fade?
— O Poet, in mercy tell!
Ay, love shall reign in these hearts of ours
When eyes, and lips, and wind-waved flowers
Have known their last farewell.

For love is purer than dewdrops are,
The winds go never so wide and far,
And none may truly tell
How when the close caress is gone,
And words are silent, true love lives on,
Never to say farewell!

GEORGE ARNOLD

FROM "TO LYDIA MARIA CHILD"

STILL on the lips of all we question
The finger of God's silence lies;
Will the lost hands in ours be folded?
Will the shut eyelids ever rise?

O friend, no proof beyond this yearning,
This outreach of our hearts we need;
God will not mock the hope he giveth,
No love he prompts shall vainly plead.

Then let us stretch our hands in darkness,
And call our loved ones o'er and o'er;
Some day their arms shall close about us,
And the old voices speak once more.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

O LOVE and Death!
Ye have sad meetings on this changeful earth,
Many and sad! — but airs of heavenly breath
Shall melt the links that bind you, for your birth
Is far apart.

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

NOT Death is strong enough to part asunder
Whom Life and Love hath joined.

EDWIN ARNOLD

HE AND SHE

"SHE is dead!" they said to him, "Come away;
Kiss her! and leave her!—thy love is clay!"

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of marble they laid it fair;

Over her eyes, which gazed too much,
They drew her lids with gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows, and her dear, pale face
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes:—
Which were the whiter no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
"Come away," they said, "God understands!"

And then there was Silence; and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
For they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she!"

And they held their breath as they left the room
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he — who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead, —

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turn'd it! — alone again — he and she!

He and she! but she would not speak,
Though he kiss'd in the old place, the quiet cheek:

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he call'd her the name that was fondest erewhile:

He and she; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love!

Then said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath!
Is there no voice — no language of death

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct, — intense?

"See, now, — I listen with soul, not ear —
What was the secret of dying, Dear?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all,
How the spirit could let life's flower fall?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

"Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?

"Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

"And was it the innermost heart of bliss
To find out so what a wisdom love is?

"Oh, perfect Dead! oh, dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear;

"I listen — as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as glad heaven; and you do not tell!

"There must be pleasure in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

"I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 't were your hot tears upon *my* brow shed.

"I would say though the Angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"You should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise,

"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

. . . . . .

Oh, foolish world! Oh, most kind dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the soft rich voice, in the dear old way:

"The utmost wonder is this, — I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear;

"I can speak, now you listen with soul alone;
If your soul could see, it would all be shown

"What a strange, delicious amazement is Death,
To be without body and breathe without breath.

"I should laugh for joy if you did not cry;
Oh, listen; Love lasts! — Love never will die!

"I am only your Angel who was your Bride!
And I know that though dead I have never died."

EDWIN ARNOLD

THE VIOLET

GOD does not send us strange flowers every year,
When the spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces,
The violet is here.

It all comes back, the odor, grace, and hue,
Each sweet relation of its life repeated;
No blank is left, no looking-for is cheated,
It is the thing we knew.

So after death's winter it must be,
God will not put strange signs in heavenly places,
The old love shall look out from the old faces,
Veilchen! I shall have thee.

MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY

WE TWO

AH, painful-sweet! how can I take it in!
That somewhere in the illimitable blue
Of God's pure space, which men call Heaven, we two
Again shall find each other, and begin
The infinite life of love, a life akin
To angels', — only angels never knew
The ecstacy of blessedness that drew
Us each to each, even in this world of sin.

Yea, find each other! The remotest star
Of all the galaxies would hold in vain
Our souls apart, that have been heretofore
As closely interchangeable as are
One mind and spirit. Oh, joy that aches to pain,
To be together — we two — forever more!

MARGARET J. PRESTON

AT END

AT end of Love, at end of Life,
At end of Hope, at end of Strife,
At end of all we cling to so, —
The sun is setting — must we go?

At dawn of Love, at dawn of Life,
At dawn of Peace that follows Strife,
At dawn of all we long for so, —
The sun is rising — let us go!

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

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